
UNIT 1 NATURE AND CONCEPT OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY RELATED TO OTHER DISCIPLINES

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"We can barely be distinguished from our social situations, for they form us and decide our possibilities." (Sartre,)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Social psychology is the study of how people think about, influence and relate to others. It emerged at the interface of psychology and sociology in the early 20th century. While Psychology analyses the nature of humans, sociology analyses the nature of society. Social psychology on the other hand, analyses the nature and the relation of man to society. The sphere of social psychology is social and its focus is individual. It is the study of individual in social situation. This social situation can be person to person interaction, person to group interaction and a group related to another group. A social psychologist uses scientific methods to study how we perceive peoples and social events, how do we influence others and get influenced, social relation and communication and group dynamics.

In this unit we will be dealing with definition and nature of social psychology, scope of social psychology, historical perspective of social psychology, and social psychology as related to other disciplines.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you will be able to:

- 1 Define social psychology;
- 1 Describe the nature and scope of social psychology;
- 1 Trace the emergence and development of modern social psychology;
- 1 Analyse the major contributors in the field; and
- 1 Explain how is it related and differentiated from the other related disciplines such as sociology, anthropology etc.

1.2 NATURE AND CONCEPT OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

The last century witnessed the creation of new sciences and specialised branches for specific needs together with the technological developments that have changed the scenario of education and knowledge. New social realities generated new problems. Social psychology came into existence at the time when the world was undergoing a great upheaval. A significant number of facts in the fields of linguistics, anthropology, ethnography and archaeology needed interpretation for various facts. This need manifested itself in the development of two sciences regarded as the parents of social psychology: psychology and sociology.

Societies manifest themselves through the activities of people, through communication and interaction and in turn shape the behaviour of individuals. The study of social psychology enable us to understand the dynamics of human behaviour in social situations and what effects do these situations exert on individuals and in what ways are these situations get changed by the behaviour of the individuals. Social psychology intrudes social life by providing practical recommendations in various areas. The practical needs of the discipline have been increased by the increased demand for efficient management in the areas of industry, education, health, mass communication system, struggle against anti-social behaviour, public services and sports etc. In this unit we will discuss the concept and definition of

social psychology, its background and developments and its relation to other social sciences. Floyd Allport (1924) has defined social psychology as “the scientific study of the experience and behaviour of individuals in relation to other individuals, groups and culture”. A similar definition by Gordon W. Allport (1968) states that social psychology is a discipline “that attempts to understand and explain how the thought, feeling and behaviour of an individual are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied presence of others.”

The above definitions include the elements: scientific study, experience and behaviour, individual, group and culture that throw light upon the nature of the discipline. These elements are elaborated below:

1.2.1 Social Psychology is Scientific in Nature

Social psychology is scientific in its approach to the range of topics it deals. One may find many common sense explanations and literary works that tell us about interpersonal relations, love, jealousy, aggression, altruism (helping behaviour) and the roles of individuals in groups. The difference lies in the approach that a social psychologist adopts. It adopts scientific methods which we will discuss later but in all the methods a three step basic process has been employed (McDavid and Harari, 1994):

- i) The collection of carefully made observations. Careful observation requires gathering of information about issues and processes of interest, plus an attitude of scepticism.
- ii) The ordered integration of these observations and the statement of general principles.
- iii) The utilisation of these general principles to predict future observations.

As an example we can take this statement, “When people try to dismiss those who ask the big public questions on being emotional, it is a strategy to avoid debate.”¹ How do we proceed to check the validity of the statement? First, we have to see the big national or international issues, big in the sense they raise problems of wider concern, like the displacement of inhabitants of a particular place due to some projects. After this we will have to select a representative sample population and get their opinions. How many people take it as a serious or not so serious issue? What are the reasons for their opinions? After this a social psychologist can analyse the causes that lie behind and the socio-psychological mechanisms underlying it. What does it reveals about the nature of people and how people think about the topics of wider social concern when they are not a part of it or is there a difference when they themselves are affected?

1.2.2 Social Psychology Studies the Experience and Behaviour of Individuals

Social psychologists typically explain human behaviour as a result of the interaction of mental states and immediate social situations. In Kurt Lewin’s (1951) famous heuristic formula, behaviour can be viewed as a function of the person and the environment, $B = f(P, E)$, i.e. behaviour is a function of person and environment.

Consider the following questions: Why do people help others? What is jealousy? What are its main causes and effects?

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The first question is about the overt behaviour i.e. the behaviour that can be directly observed. The second is about an emotional state. Social psychology studies both the observable behaviours; and emotions and thoughts which cannot be observed directly. For these behaviours the stimulus situation can be Individuals: two person situation (dyadic)

Groups: Individual and collective organisations

Culture

“Social stimulus situation has some important capacities for change that non-social social stimulus situation lacks” (Mc David and Harari 1995: 16). Social stimulus situation and individual bear a reciprocal relation between them. Individuals act as both “a respondent to as well as an active creator of the social situation”.

1.2.3 Causes of Social Behaviour and Thought

Social psychology studies the behaviour of individual as well as theorises about the causes and factors that might lie behind a particular behaviour and phenomena. The following five factors that affect social interaction have been most studied (Baron and Byron 1995)

- 1 The action and characteristics of others.
- 1 Basic cognitive processes: memory, reasoning, belief, ideas, judgements about others.
- 1 Ecological Variables: direct and indirect influences of the physical environment
- 1 The cultural context: cultural norms, membership in various groups.
- 1 Biological aspects of human behaviour and genetic inheritance relevant to social behaviour.

Social psychology focuses on understanding the causes of social behaviour and on identifying factors that shape our feelings, behaviour and thought in social situations. The basic assumption behind is: “Accurate and useful information about even the most complex aspects of social behavior and social thought can be acquired through the use of basic methods of science” (Baron & Byron 1995; 13).

Thus social psychology is the scientific study of behaviour of individuals in social and cultural context. It explains and analyses the causes behind behaviours which may be related to the one or more than one factors mentioned above.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Elucidate the nature and concept of social psychology.

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2) What are the areas of studies of social psychology?

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3) What are the causes of social behaviour and thought?

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1.3 SCOPE OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Social psychology attempts to understand the relationship between minds, groups, and behaviors in three general ways:

- 1) It tries to see how the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of other(s). This includes social perception, social interaction, and the many kinds of social influence (like trust, power, and persuasion). It deals with questions like: How do small group dynamics impact cognition and emotional states?

How do social groups control or contribute to behaviour, emotion, or attitudes of the individual members?

How does the group impact the individual?

How does the individual operate within the social group?

It tries to understand the influence that individual perceptions and behaviours have upon the behaviour of groups. How does persuasion work to change group behaviour, emotion or attitudes?

- 2) Second, it tries to understand the influence that individual perceptions and behaviours have upon the behaviour of groups. This includes looking at things like group productivity in the workplace and group decision making. It looks at questions like:

What are the reasons behind conformity, diversity, and deviance?

- 3) Third, and finally, social psychology tries to understand groups themselves as behavioural entities, and the relationships and influences that one group has upon another group. It asks questions like:

What makes some groups hostile to one another, and others neutral or civil?

Do groups behave in a different way than an individual outside the group?

In European textbooks there is also fourth level called the “ideological” level. It studies the societal forces that influence the human psyche.

1.4 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS: THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

To understand the contribution of social psychology and what is distinct about it, we need to know its historical origins. The formation of pre-conditions of social psychology is as a whole the same as the development of any other scientific discipline. The socio-psychological ideas originally took shape within the realm of philosophy and then gradually branched off from the system of psychological knowledge. First we will briefly discuss the social thought before the advent of social science and then discuss the second stage of the development of social psychology which is deemed to be “more productive. Current trends of the discipline will be discussed later in the Unit 4.

1.4.1 Social Thought Before the Advent of Social Science

Two earlier forms of social thought over the centuries are Platonic and Aristotelian.

Platonic thought emphasised the primacy of state over the individual who had to be educated to become truly social.

Aristotelian thought states that human being is social by nature and nature can be trusted to enable individuals to live together and to enter personal relationships from which families, tribes and ultimately the state will naturally develop.

In modern times these two traditions of social thought have been known as socio centred approach and individual centred approach. Socio centred approach emphasises the determining function of social structures (systems, institutions and groups) for individual experience and behaviour. According to the individual centred approach social systems are said to be explicable in terms of individual processes and functions. For Hegel (1770-1831), the German philosopher, the state is not only the ultimate form of society but the incarnation of the objective social mind of which individual minds are active participants. The notion of Group Mind derived from Hegel's supra-individual nature.

Social psychology from its beginning has been defined as the scientific study of the individual in the social context. Individualism has been an inherent property of the discipline. Individualistic doctrine says that all the explanations of individual social phenomena are to be rejected unless they are expressed in terms of individual. Individualism in psychology has been characterised and criticised for the self centred denial of the other. Individualism has appeared in two forms in sociological thought:

Hedonism: People act in order to secure and maintain pleasure and to avoid and reduce pain.

Utilitarianism: The doctrine that advocates the pursuit of the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

For most modern theories of conditioning and of motivation, the underlying ideas of individual satisfaction (reinforcement, reward, reduction of stress, of dissonance, uncertainty) are variations of the pleasure or utility principle. Utility and satisfaction are important constructs involved in many social psychological theories.

From Machiavelli (1513) and Thomas Hobbes (1651) the concept of power and its role in social relationships returned in social psychology. The concept of social power (social influence) found its proper frame of reference in the field theory and social exchange theory. In Lewinian field theory 'power' became the term for the potential to influence others while control and influence refer to the power of action. Research areas where power has been studied are: aggression, conformity to group pressure and obedience to authority, and power in language.

Modern social psychology was also influenced by the developments in the nineteenth century in two major areas: sociology and theory of evolution. We will discuss these influences later under the titles: social psychology and other disciplines and the influence of evolutionary theory will be discussed in current trends in social psychology.

1.4.2 The Second Stage of Development: Social Psychology Emerges as a Discipline

In the process of branching off from the psychology as a separate discipline, three moments are important to be outlined (Galina Andreyeva 1990):

The requirement concerning the solution of socio-psychological problems which aroused in various related sciences.

The processes involved in the separation of socio-psychological problems within the two parent disciplines: psychology and sociology.

Finally, the description of the first forms of independent socio- psychological knowledge.

In the mid 19th century, the first forms of socio-psychological theories that appeared, three were most important in terms of their influence: *people's psychology*, *mass psychology* and *the theory of instincts of social behaviour*. These theories developed in the background of philosophical and descriptive tradition, hence their nature was speculative and abstract.

1.4.3 People's Psychology

People's psychology developed as one of the first forms of socio-psychological theory in Germany in the mid 19th century. Most outstanding creators of people's psychology were Moritz Lazarus (1824-1903) and Heymann Steinthal (1823-1893). In 1859 the journal *People's Psychology and Linguistics* was founded in which the article by Lazarus and Steinthal entitled "*Introductory Thoughts on People's Psychology*" was printed. The article expressed the idea that the main force of history is the people, or the 'spirit of the whole', which can be seen in art, religion, language, myths, customs etc. The individual consciousness is only its product, a link in a certain mental connection. The task of social psychology was to perceive the psychological essence of the spirit of the people and discover the laws that guide the spiritual activity of the people.

The views of Wilhem Wundt (1832-1920) furthered the development of People's psychology. Wundt (1900) proposed that psychology consists of two parts: physiological psychology and people's psychology (*Völkerpsychologie*: German word for people's psychology). Physiological psychology, in his views was an

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experimental discipline, but experimentation is not useful for the study of higher mental processes: thinking and language. For the areas like language, myths, customs and art people's psychology need to adopt other methods.

The views proposed by Wundt were criticised by Vygotsky. People's psychology considered language, myths, customs, art and religion as objectives of study. Vygotsky called these *clots of ideology* or *crystals*. The task of psychology he proposed was not to study these crystals but the solution itself. He opposed the thought that social psychology should study the mentality of collective personality. The personality of the individual, he said, is also social and is therefore an object of study in social psychology. Social psychology focuses on the mentality of the separate individual and collective psychology – on personal psychology under collective manifestation (e.g. army and church). Social psychology is the study of cultural and historical determination of mentality. Lev Vygotsky dealt with two questions directly related to the development of social psychology. The higher mental functions (arbitrary memory, active attention, abstract thinking and volitional act) could not be considered immediate functions of the brain, roots of these functions lie in social condition. He expounded upon the idea of cultural historical determination of all mental processes.

Self Assessment Questions

1) What is the scope of social psychology?

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2) Trace historically the development of social psychology.

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3) What factors contributed to the emergence of modern social psychology?

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4) What was the nature of social thought before the advent of social science?

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5) Discuss social psychology emerging as a discipline.

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6) What is meant by people's psychology? Discuss in the context emergence of social psychology?

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1.4.4 Mass Psychology

This theory emerged in France in the latter half of the 19th century. The creators of mass psychology Italian Lawyer Scipio Sighele (1868-1913) and French sociologist Gustave Le Bon (1841-1931) began with Gabriel Trade's (1843-1904) basic ideas on the role of irrational movements in social behaviour and the role of imitation. According to Le Bon any accumulation of people represented the idea of the mass with depersonalisation and predominance of emotions over intellect, the general loss of intellect and the loss of the sense personal responsibility. The events like mass movements in the late 19th and early 20th century, rapid social and economic changes due to industrialisation and urbanisation were conducive to mass psychology but like people's psychology it did not develop within the context of academic psychology. It did not have any significant consequences as regards the future of social psychology.

1.4.5 The First Textbooks of Social Psychology

The year 1908 is considered to the year of final emergence of social psychology as an independent scientific discipline. This year two books appeared with the title social psychology: *An Introduction to Social psychology* by William McDougall and the other *Social Psychology* by sociologist Edward A. Ross. Before these two works in 1897, James Mark Baldwin's work, *Social and Ethical Interpretation in Mental Development* was published in New York which can be considered as one of the first systematic manuals in social psychology.

According to E. A. Ross social psychology deals with uniformities in feeling, belief, volition and action. Uniformities were to be explained by the capacities for imitation and suggestion operating among individuals collectively. McDougall's theory proposed that inborn instincts are the cause of social behaviour. In his views, tendencies of imitation and suggestion are rooted in their biological nature. Imitation supposedly grew out of non-specific innate tendency, whereas suggestion was seen stemming from an instinct to submit to a prestigious person or symbol.

In spite of great popularity of McDougall's ideas, they played a negative role in the history of science. Recognition of instincts as the motive force behind the social behaviour gave importance to the irrational and unconscious motives. Human

understanding and thought processes were not given much attention. The overcoming of the theory of instincts is deemed to be an important milestone in the formation of scientific social psychology.

1.4.6 The Beginning of Experimental Research

The early 20th century especially the period after the First World War, is considered the beginning of the metamorphosis of social psychology into an experimental science. But the best known of the early laboratory study was Norman Triplett's 1897 experiment on "the dynamogenic effects of pace making". It was the first study of an individual's performance is affected by the presence of others.

The experimental investigations by Walter Moede in Europe and Floyd Allport in US served as a milestone in this process. Allport compared the performance of individuals working alone with that of the persons working either before an audience or in the presence of others engaged in the same activity. He found that the latter condition often improved performance. The phenomenon is known as the social facilitation effect. In 1924 Allport published the first social psychology textbook making extensive use of experimental research. This work encouraged the growth of an experimentally oriented social psychology.

The next two decades (after Allport's publication) were marked by systemic investigations in the field in the areas such as the development of attitude measures, social norms, aggression, leadership and social influence (conformity). Theodore Newcomb (late 1930s) assessed the social and political attitudes held by college students and demonstrated how their attitudes were modified by the views prevailing at the college (Peer influence). Muzafer Sherif (1935) studied the nature and impact of social norms- rules indicating how individuals ought to behave. In 1939, Dollard, Doob and Miller demonstrated the relationship between frustration and aggression. They concluded that frustration produces instigation to aggression. Kurt Lewin, Lipitt and White (1939) carried out revealing research on the nature of leadership and related group processes. The main attention began to be focused on the small groups which facilitated experimental method.

From the earlier thoughts of group mind and depersonalisation, social psychological theories at this period emphasised the overriding importance of the individual's thought and understanding. In 1948, a revolution got under way in social psychology. Precursor to this change was the establishment of Research Centre for Group Dynamics at MIT by eminent theorist Kurt Lewin. Kurt Lewin is often referred to as the father of applied social psychology. Experimental works due to the efforts of Kurt Lewin put social psychology as a science in a more advantageous position. He believed that significant social problems can be investigated in the laboratory with experimentation. He favoured the analyses based on individual's understanding of the situation surrounding him or her.

All the enthusiasm for experimental orientation stemmed from the need to provide authentic knowledge about the real problems of society. But it was begun to be realised that skillfully conducted laboratory research created a distance between social reality and the topics under investigation. The social content from these researches was taken away in the favour of experimentation. In the mid 20th century, social psychology faced the problem of analysis of the enormous

experimental research by theoretical knowledge. The need for the proportional development of two spheres of scientific knowledge – the theoretical and the experimental was felt. 1950s and later, many psychologists contributed significantly by theoretical explanations in the areas such as conformity (Soloman Asch 1956, 1958), cognitive dissonance (Leon Festinger 1950, 1954, 1957) and attribution theory (Fritz Heider, Herold Kelly and E. E. Jones). In this decade, social psychology was brought closer to the cognitive psychology dealing with thought, judgment and decision making.

1.4.7 Middle Range Theories

The need of theoretical explanation for the experimentations in the social psychological areas gave birth to the theories specifically designed to be applied in the areas of social psychological research.

The idea of creating “middle range theory” was first developed by Robert Merton. Middle range theories are the theories that account for a specific aspect of social behaviour and do not try to encompass all of social life. Social psychological theories tend to be specific and focused, rather than global and general. The field theory of Kurt Lewin is often considered a model of middle range theory. The greater part of social psychological theories existing today (theories of frustration aggression, changes of attitudes, cognitive dissonance, cooperation and competition etc.) belong to the bracket of middle range theories. At present, the theories of middle range are mostly concentrated around four trends: behaviourism, psychoanalysis, cognitivism and interactionism. The theories from the vantage point of behaviourism, psychoanalysis and cognitivism are the socio-psychological variants of main stream psychological thought; and interactionism represents theories mainly contributed by sociological perspective. Some characteristic attributes of major psychological theories are tabulated below:

Table: Major Psychological Theories and their relationship to social psychology

(Source: McDavid & Harari, 1994: P.37)

Theory	Relationship to Social Psychology
Psychoanalytic	The Individual in Society Model of man: Homo valence (the striving man). Man as a creator of society, rather than its product.
Cognitive	Homo Sapiens (the thinking man). Society is represented in man's experience as a part of his life space.
Behaviouristic	Homo Mechanicus (the reactive man). Society provides a set of stimulus conditions that operate as cues and reinforcers for behaviour
Psychoanalytic	Contributions to Social Psychology Study of personality development and socialisation, cross cultural comparison of child rearing, aggressive behaviour and its roots, interpersonal identification and family interaction.
Cognitive	Studies of attitudes and values, language and thought, group dynamics and action research.

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Behaviouristic	Experimental and theoretical, Study of socialisation, social reward and punishment.
Psychoanalytic	Current Status in Social Psychology Decreasing significance.
Cognitive	Maintaining Stable significance. Increasing significance
Behaviouristic	

Clark Leonard Hull's (introduced the concept of *intervening variables*) . laboration of the theory frustration-aggression of Norman Miller and John Dollard is the major contribution of behaviourism to social psychology. Neobehaviourism seeks to create a standard of scientific research in social psychology, involving thoroughly developed laboratory experiments and Theodore W. Adorno's *The Authoritative Personality* (1959) is a good example of psychoanalytic contribution to social psychology. Authoritarian personality describes a cluster of traits that predispose individuals towards acceptance of extreme political ideologies such as Nazism.

Cognitivism in social psychology began with Gestalt psychology and the field theory of Kurt Lewin. The examination of social behaviour from the point of view of cognitive processes of the individual is its basic principle. The theory of cognitive balance states that main motivating factor of individual behaviour is the demand for the establishment of a balance of his cognitive structure.

The theory of balanced structures by Fritz Heider, the theory of communicative acts by Theodore Newcomb, the theory of cognitive dissonance by Leon Festinger and the theory of congruence by C. E. Osgood and Tannenbaum all relate to the theory of cognitive balance. Cognitivism emphasised the role of humanisation in social psychology, underlining the role and the significance of mental formations in explaining the social behaviour of the individual. Interactionism includes George Herbert Mead's work on the theory of symbolic interactionism.

However in contemporary social psychology interactionism include not only the development of Mead's ideas, but also a group of different theories combined under the one name, namely role theory and reference group theory. In all theories, an attempt is made to establish the social determinants of human behaviour, by introducing a key concept of interactionism within which the personality is shaped. However the analysis of social determinants of behaviour is reduced to the statement of interaction. Therefore, the logical nature of the interactionist orientation proves to be, to a significant degree external. The fundamental methodological problems of socio-psychological knowledge remain unresolved.

1.4.8 Historical Developments: Summary Table

Table: Summary table of Historical development of social psychology

Periods	Major Trends
The Early years: 1908 – 1939 McDougall (1908):	Social behaviour stems from innate tendencies or instincts. Floyd Allport (1924): Social Facilitation Effect; emphasized the value of experimentation. Sherif (1935): Social norms and conformity. Kurt Lewin et al (1939): Leadership and related group processes.

Social Psychology: The Youth: 1940s – 1960s	Expansion of Scope: every aspect of social behaviour included in the research; 1948: a revolution got under way favouring the concept of human behaviour as thoughtful and purposive rather than guided by instincts, Kurt Lewin: Experimental works due to the efforts of Kurt Lewin put social psychology as a science in a more advantageous position 1960s: fully came off age. Study of the influence of groups and group membership on individual behaviour, relation between personality traits and social behaviour. Leon Festinger (1957): the theory of cognitive dissonance.
A Maturing Field: 1970s and 1980s	Rapid pace change of the last decade accelerated. New topics and perspectives emerge: Attribution (How to infer the causes of other's behaviours), gender differences and environmental psychology, growing influence of cognitive perspective and growing emphasis on application (personal health, legal processes, work settings, education and population studies)
1990s and beyond	Two major trends from the past decade continued, namely, growing influence of cognitive perspective and increasing interest in application. The study of affective states in determining social behaviour gained impetus; Multicultural perspective: the study of universal and cultural social behaviours.
Current Trends	Evolutionary social psychology, the changing world, technology and human social behaviour, Neurocognitive perspective and social behaviour.

Self Assessment Questions

1) What is Mass psychology? Explain with examples.

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2) Discuss the publication of the textbooks in social psychology.

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3) Enumerate the various experiments that were conducted in social psychology.

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4) What are middle range theories? Explain

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5) Discuss the various theories in terms of social psychology.

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1.5 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND OTHER DISCIPLINES

In the broadest terms, the central task of social psychology is the systematic study of the relation between the individual and the collective phenomena. This daunting task overlaps with that of other social sciences. Many scholarly fields study social behaviour, viz., sociology, anthropology, economics, political science and sociolinguistics. The social psychological approach differs from disciplines that study large scale societal problems and from those that focus on the individual. Social psychology is delineated from the other areas of social study by both its method and its approach. There is some overlapping and sharing with other discipline in terms of theories and content.

Three levels of analysis

Three different levels of analysis have been recognised which tell us about the differences in the approach of various social sciences.

1.5.1 Societal Level Analysis

The goal of societal analysis is to identify links between broad social forces and general patterns of social behaviours. Social behaviour from this viewpoint is explained by factors like economic hard times, class conflicts etc. This analytical approach is adopted by sociologists, economists and political scientists. These scholars attempt to understand general patterns of social behaviours, such as homicide rates, voting behaviours and consumer spending. To study violence in urban areas, social scientists might identify relationships between rates of crime and factors such as poverty, immigration or industrialisation.

1.5.2 Individual Level Analysis

This level of analysis is used by clinical and personality psychologists who explain behaviour in terms of a person's unique personality characteristics and life history. According to this viewpoint, with the help of personality traits and motives the reasons of people's behaviour can be explained. Individual differences in childhood experiences, ability, motivation and personality are emphasised. At this level of analysis, violent crimes will be explained in terms of unique histories and characteristics of the criminal.

1.5.3 Interpersonal Level Analysis

The focus of a social psychologist lies on a person's current social situation. The constituents of social situation are—the other people, their attitudes and behaviours and their relationship to the individual. This emphasis is based on the idea, 'change the social context, individual will change'. To understand the violent crime, social psychologist might consider the inter-personal relations. One social explanation suggests that frustrating situations make people angry and increase their tendency to act aggressively.

1.5.4 Amalgamation of Sociology and Psychology

It borrows and uses concepts from both the disciplines: psychology and sociology. For a sociologist, the basic unit of analysis is the social system (groups, institutions, cultures, families etc). For a psychologist, the basic unit of analysis is the individual. But, individual and social system cannot be studied without the reference to either of these. As one is contained in the other, and the existence of the other is nothing without the first. It is difficult and even incomplete if one is explained without the other. The difference may lie in the angle of approach, the purpose and the focus of study. Various views gave birth to two forms of social psychology: psychological social psychology and sociological social psychology. From the sociological point of view social psychology is the study of mass phenomena of psyche, the psychology of classes and large social groups, elements of group mentality (traditions, morals, customs etc.). The psychological social psychology puts individual at the centre and focuses at the mental peculiarities of the individual (personality typology) and the position of individual in the collective. Briefly these can be defined as:

Psychological Social Psychology (PSP): Emphasis upon subject's mental processes, dispositions, experiences and immediate social situation.

Sociological Social Psychology (SSP): Emphasis upon subject's place in social order, their socialised roles and historical social context.

Another approach emphasises the synthesis of both. According to this point of view social psychology is a science that studies both the mass mental phenomenon and the position of an individual in a group. It includes the study of social psychology of the individual, communities and communication, social relations and the forms of cultural activities.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Discuss social psychology as related to other disciplines.

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- 2) What are the three levels of analysis. Explain with examples

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3) What is societal level analysis?

4) What is individual and interpersonal analysis?

5) Discuss the amalgamation of sociology and psychology to make social psychology.

1.6 INTERDISCIPLINARY VS. INTRADISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

The interdisciplinary approach emphasises the incorporation of significant elements from various disciplines. This incorporation can be found more at the level of content from the diverse disciplines especially sociology. Intradisciplinary approach conceptualises social psychology as a specialty branch within the discipline of psychology. This approach defines both the problems and phenomena together with its method. A psychologist maintains his investigative focus on the individual against a background of contextual factors. From the intradisciplinary perspective, social psychology is defined as the psychological study of the individual related to the social system. Thus social psychological phenomena can be explained on at least four levels as given below:

- 1 Personal attributes
- 1 Actual situations in which the psychological phenomena is studied

- 1 Reference to the people's social position
- 1 The ideologies and belief systems to which they adhere.

If one looks at the recent developments, one may find that all of them transcend a narrow definition of social psychology, all of them require that their proponents be versed in one or more neighbouring disciplines, above all sociology and cognitive psychology together with anthropology, political science, philosophy and linguistics. All of them contribute to the intellectual vitality of the field in all its branches. Whether the debate among them will lead to a more unified social psychology or to a greater separateness only the time will tell. Here, we will briefly discuss the relation of social psychology to sociology, anthropology and sociolinguistics.

1.6.1 Social Psychology and Sociology

Sociology is defined as the study of society. Sociology is the social science dealing with social system and structures, relationships, institutes and entire societies. The emergence of sociology in the nineteenth century greatly contributed to the development of social psychology. John Stuart Mill, Auguste Comte and others laid the foundation for social psychology by asserting that human social cognition and behaviour could and should be studied scientifically like any other natural science. A sociologist begins with the domain of society and works towards the individual while the social psychologist reverses the order. As far as social psychology is concerned it is sometimes difficult to demarcate it from social psychology with a sharp line as both the disciplines invest most of their resources in the ambiguous middle ground. Social psychology exchanges freely ideas, methods and models with sociology. In fact this exchange is so rich and ubiquitous that it is often difficult to distinguish the two fields. Being the study of individual in a society, the vantage point of social psychology is more prone to the individual and the experimental method. But with the expanding application, social psychology is adopting the other methods like ethnography and qualitative research more popular with the domain of sociology.

1.6.2 Social Psychology and Anthropology

Broadly considered as to be the scientific study of human beings, Anthropology originated as a discipline in the Darwinian revolution of the middle of the nineteenth century. Underpinning all the anthropological works is the concern of mapping human variation (biological, behavioural and cultural) and to explain, interpret and understand the directions in the development of human behaviour. The main topics of investigation are primitive societies, cultural relativism, unity of human species, human diversity and human evolution. Social psychology can make good use of the theories about cultures and societies which might assist in the explanation of the individual behaviour in a particular society. Anthropology can give a clear picture of the cultural and social context to a social psychologist.

1.6.3 Social Psychology and Sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics includes the areas of study which connects language with society. The discipline uses theories and methods from diverse field like psychology, sociology and anthropology to understand language in societies. Sociolinguistics is centrally concerned with methodology. It is firmly based on the observation of actual, preferably spontaneous speech behaviour. The studies within this field have contributed in terms of understanding language uses and behaviours of peoples in

society. The study of language contributes not only in terms of language behaviours but the rich data helps in building theories. The field of sociolinguistics equally borrows theories from social psychology to draw inferences about behaviours from the linguistic data.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) How are interdisciplinary and Intradisciplinary approaches different?
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- 2) Discuss the relationship between sociology and social psychology
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- 3) Elucidate the relationship between social psychology and anthropology.
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- 4) What is the relationship between social psychology and sociolinguistics?
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1.7 LET US SUM UP

Social psychology is the scientific study of the experience and behaviour of individuals in relation to other individuals, group and culture. Social psychology theorises about the causes and factors behind a particular behaviour and phenomena these can be action and characteristics of others, basic cognitive processes: memory, reasoning, belief, ideas, judgements about others, ecological variables: direct and indirect influences of the physical environment, cultural context: cultural norms, membership in various groups and biological aspects of human behaviour and genetic inheritance relevant to social behaviour.

The socio-psychological ideas originally took shape within the realm of philosophy and then gradually branched off from the system of psychological knowledge. The first forms of socio-psychological were most: people's psychology, mass psychology

and the theory of instincts of social behaviour. Experimental works due to the efforts of Kurt Lewin put social psychology as a science in a more advantageous position. At present, the field witnessed the growing influence of cognitive perspective and increasing interest in application.

The social psychological approach differs from disciplines that study large scale societal problems and from those that focus on the individual.

1.8 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Define Social psychology. Discuss its nature and scope.
- 2) Write a note on the social thought before the advent of social psychology.
- 3) “A revolution got under way favouring the concept of human behaviour as thoughtful and purposive rather than guided by instincts.” In the light of the statement explain the developments in the field of social psychology.
- 4) What are the three levels of analysis in social sciences? Which level of analysis would you relate to the social psychology?
- 5) What is the difference between the psychological social psychology and sociological social psychology?
- 6) Discuss the relation of social psychology with other social sciences.
- 7) What do you understand by the interdisciplinary and intradisciplinary approach?

1.9 GLOSSARY

Social psychology	: Social psychology is the scientific study of the experience and behaviour of individuals in relation to other individuals, group and culture.
Hedonism	: People act in order to secure and maintain pleasure and avoid and reduce pain.
Utilitarianism	: The doctrine that advocates the pursuit of the greatest happiness of the greatest number.
People's psychology	: The main force of history is the people, or the 'spirit of the whole' which can be seen in art, religion, language, myths, customs etc. The individual consciousness is only its product, a link in a certain mental connection.
Mass psychology	: Emphasised the role of irrational movements in social behaviour and the role of imitation. Any accumulation of people represented the idea of the mass with depersonalisation and predominance of emotions over intellect, the general loss of intellect and the loss of the sense personal responsibility.

Introduction to Social Psychology

- Middle range theories** : The theories that account for a specific aspect of social behaviour and do not try to encompass all of social life. Social psychological theories tend to be specific and focused, rather than global and general.
- Societal analysis** : To identify links between broad social forces and general patterns of social behaviours.
- Individual level of analysis** : Used by clinical and personality psychologists who explain behaviour in terms of a person's unique personality characteristics and life history
- Interpersonal level of analysis** : The focus of a social psychologist lies on a person's current social situation. The constituents of social situation are- the other people, their attitudes and behaviours and their relationship to the individual.

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UNIT 2 SOCIAL COGNITION: ATTRIBUTION THEORY

Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Person Perception and Social Cognition
- 2.3 Cognitive Algebra: Additive and Averaging Models
- 2.4 Impression Formation
 - 2.4.1 Schemas: Holding our Impressions Together
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- 2.5 Attribution: Explaining the Causes of Behaviour
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 - 2.7.2 Attribution Theory and its Applicability in Education
 - 2.7.3 Additional Concepts Related to Attribution Theory
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- 2.12 Suggested Readings

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The way in which people come to an understanding of both others and themselves has been a major focus of study for social psychologists. The topic is critical for an understanding of social behaviour because how people process information and make judgments of others and how they explain the causes of behaviour have an important influence on their own behaviour. Moreover, as you will see in this unit, social psychologists have found that learning how people understand their own and others' behaviour provides a clear basis for solving a variety of everyday

problems ranging from insomnia to poor school performance. This unit is focused on the process of understanding and evaluating others. We will first discuss person perception and social cognition: how people make sense of information they have about an individual to form an overall impression and how that information is stored and organised in memory. Next, we will discuss attribution theory which encompasses how people explain the causes of both their own and others' behaviour.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, you will be able to:

- 1 Define person perception;
- 1 Explain the various factors contributing to person perception;
- 1 Define social cognition;
- 1 Describe the characteristic features of social cognition;
- 1 Explain impression formation;
- 1 Describe the factors contributing to impression formation;
- 1 Explain attribution theory; and
- 1 Analyse the various types of errors in attribution.

2.2 PERSON PERCEPTION AND SOCIAL COGNITION

In an early study on person perception Harold Kelly (1950) gave a group to students one of two descriptions of a lecturer whom they had never met, and then had the lecturer lead a discussion. In one case, students were told that the lecturer was a rather warm person, industrious, critical, practical and determined. But in a second condition, a group of students was told that the same lecturer was “a rather cold person, industrious, critical, practical and determined.” The crucial difference was the substitution of the word cold for warm in the second description. You may be surprised to learn that the substitution made a drastic change in the way the lecturer was viewed in the two conditions. Students who were told that the lecturer was cold rated him far less positively after the discussion than those who were told that he was warm, although the behaviour of the lecturer was invariant across the two conditions.

The Kelley experiment, now considered a classic, illustrates an early view of person perception, which concentrated on the way in which individuals focus on particular traits when forming overall impressions of others. According to this perspective, certain traits play an unusually large role in determining a general impression. These traits are known as central traits. *Central traits* serve to organise the impression and provide a framework for interpreting information that is received subsequently. Solomon Asch (1946) suggested that the meaning of additional descriptive traits is altered by the presence of a central trait. Thus the word “determined” when describing an individual means something very different, depending upon whether it is preceded by the word “warm” or “cold”

2.3 COGNITIVE ALGEBRA: ADDITIVE AND AVERAGING MODELS

More precise models were suggested for impression formation. Two of these are: Additive and averaging models.

- i) **The additive model** (Anderson 1965) suggests that we simply add together the bits of information we have about a person to form a judgment. For example, if we learn that a new acquaintance is adventurous, bold and caring, we simply assign each one a value on some hypothetical scale and add them together. If, for instance, one rates adventurousness as 4; boldness as 5, and caring as 9 (on an 11 point scale) the overall impression will be expressed in mathematical terms as $4+5+9=18$. A consequence of such a model is that the inclusion of more positive traits on a list will lead to a more positive impression.
- ii) **The averaging model** (Anderson, 1974) on the other hand suggests that although we start in the same way there is an additional step in which we divide by the number of traits to form an average. (Hence, we get $4+5+9=18/3=6$). What is particularly important about this model is that the inclusion of additional information does not necessarily make the impression more positive, rather, it depends on the nature of the new traits. Hence, if we learn that the person is also neat and we scale neat as a 2, the overall impression drops: $(4+5+9+2)=20/4=5$. In contrast, a model employing addition would suggest that additional information would result in a more positive impression.

Of these two models averaging model has shown accurate predictions. But applicability of such research in actual social situations has been questioned. First people are restricted to a small finite set of trait when evaluating other persons; secondly the richness of social information is neglected. Despite such limitations, research on impression formation has provided important insights into how information about people is processed and combined.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Discuss person perception and social cognition.

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- 2) What is cognitive algebra?

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- 3) Explain the additive and average model in person perception.

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2.4 IMPRESSION FORMATION

In a classic study Luchins (1957) gave subjects a two paragraph description of a boy named Jim. One paragraph Jim walking to school with others and participating in a member of other activities. In short he was portrayed as an extrovert. In the second paragraph, the activities described were similar but Jim did them all alone, thus appearing introvert. Subjects were presented with the two paragraphs, but the order was reversed according to condition. When asked to form an overall impression of Jim subjects' responses demonstrated a strong **primacy effect**. Primacy effect refers to the condition in which early information has a stronger impact than later information. If subject had read the extrovert paragraph first, they found them considerably more extraverted than if they had read the introvert paragraph first, and vice versa. More recent work confirms that indeed early information is weighted more heavily than later information. This holds true even when the later information is very salient and clearly contradicts earlier information.

On the other hand **recency effects**, in which later information is given more credence than early information, have been reliably produced under three sorts of conditions. First, when people are asked specifically to make a second evaluation following the presentation of new information, late information takes on more importance than earlier information. Second, if there is a relatively large time span between the presentation of new information and the initial exposure, recency effects are likely to occur. Finally, later information is given heavier weight if the task is one which people assume that practice might improve performance.

2.4.1 Schemas: Holding our Impressions Together

Given the diversity of people and settings that one encounters passing through everyday life, we might suspect that people could easily become overwhelmed with the sheer quantity of information relating to what others are like. To avoid becoming overwhelmed, people need to organise their impressions of others. The way that they are able to do this is through the production of schemas. Schemas are organised bodies of information stored in memory. The information in a schema provides a representation of the way in which social world operates as well as allowing us to categorise and interpret new information related to the schema.

We all hold schemas relating to everyday objects in our environment. We might, for instance, hold a schema for automobiles –we have an idea of what they look like, how they are used, what they can do for us and how to differentiate them from other vehicles such as buses and horse and buggy. More importantly, from a social psychological point of view we hold a schema for particular people (one's mother, girlfriend, boyfriend, brother, or sister) and of classes of people playing a given role (mail carriers, teachers, or librarians). Each of these schemas provides a way of organising behaviour into meaningful wholes.

2.4.2 Prototypes

The personality types that we derive in the case of person perception are organised into schemas known as **prototypes**. Prototypes are schemas that organise a group of personality traits into a meaningful personality type. For example, Nancy Cantor and Walter Mischel (1979) suggest a frequently held prototype concerns a person labeled on a general level as committed.

At the most specific level called the subordinate level—the prototype consists of different types of committed individuals for example monks, nuns and activists. At the middle level of specificity, there are basic classes of individuals: the religious devotee or social activist. The subordinate and middle levels of specificity are subsumed under the broader super ordinate level which encompasses the prototype as a whole.

The importance of prototypes lies in three directions:

- i) Prototypes allow people to recall more readily, recognise and categorise information about others. In a sense then information processing capabilities are enhanced through the use of prototypes.
- ii) Prototypes help us to organise the social world around us. By observing relatively few traits or behaviours, we are able to categorise people into certain prototypes and this in turn allows us to form expectations about others' behaviours.
- iii) Prototypes allow people to plan behaviour in social interactions more readily.

Self Assessment Questions

1) Define Impression formation.

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2) What are the factors that contribute to impression formation?

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3) What are schemas? How do they hold our impressions together?

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- 4) Define prototype and indicate their role in impression formation.

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2.5 ATTRIBUTION: EXPLAINING THE CAUSES OF BEHAVIOUR

We turn now to an examination of how people observe behaviour and draw inferences about what motivates behaviour. The process of attribution— an individual's understanding of the reasons behind peoples' behaviour. Attribution theory is concerned with how individuals interpret events and how this relates to their thinking and behaviour. Heider (1958) was the first to propose a psychological theory of attribution, but Weiner and colleagues (e.g., Jones et al, 1972; Weiner, 1974, 1986) developed a theoretical framework that has become a major research paradigm of social psychology.

2.5.1 Situational vs. Dispositional Causes

Behaviour will be attributed to an external cause when external reasons are more likely or plausible. Conversely behaviour will be attributed to dispositional factor when external causes are unlikely. In an experimental demonstration of this phenomenon, Jones, Gergen and Davis (1961) asked subjects to rate the personality of a job applicant who presented himself as either having or not having the characteristics that were a prerequisite for the job. Subjects were confident about assessing the candidate's true personality only when the candidate had displayed traits that were contrary to ones related to the job requirements.

2.5.2 Covariation Principle

To describe the general process people use to explain behaviour, Harold Kelley (1967) has introduced the principle of covariation. Kelley suggests that there are many possible cause and effect relationships inherent in a situation that provides a possible explanation for a behaviour. We try to analyse these relationships in order to pinpoint a particular cause for a behavior. The covariation principle states that the cause that will be chosen to explain an effect is a cause that is present when the effect is present, and absent when the effect is also absent.

According to the covariation principle, an observer can use one of three specific types of causes to explain an effect:

The actor — the individual who is demonstrating the behaviour.

The entity— the target person or thing at which the behaviour is directed.

The circumstances- the setting under which the behavior accure.

But how do we know which explanation would be correct? According to Kelley we consider three different kinds of information to figure out the answer.

Consensus: is the degree to which other people react similarly in the same situation.

Consistency: is the degree to which the actor behaves the same way in other situations.

Distinctiveness: refers to the extent to which the same behaviour occurs in relation to other people or stimuli.

Table: Summary information patterns for the three attributions

Attribution	Information Pattern		
	Consensus	Distinctiveness	Consistency
Object	High	High	High
Entity	Low	Low	High
Circumstances	Low	High	Low

Kelley suggests that we make attribution either to *dispositional factors* (something about the person) or the *situational factors* (something about the target person or the particular circumstances). Research concerning these predictions has largely been supportive of Kelley's theory. Moreover, even when some of the sources of information are absent, people still make causal inferences similar to the ones predicted by Kelley. On the other hand some evidence suggests that an important restriction must be placed on Kelley theory. Sillars (1982) argues that although the theory of causal attributions holds up when people are presented with concrete explicit information about consensus, distinctiveness and consistency, it does not work quite so well when people must infer the information on their own.

2.5.3 From Acts to Dispositions

Edward Goner and Keith Davies (1965) have produced an attribution theory that tells how a person's behaviour can be used to make inferences about his personality and motive behind his behaviour. The theory examines **correspondent inferences**, observers' ideas of how closely and overt behaviour or action represents a specific underlying intention trait or dispositions. The more behaviour appears to reflect the underlying disposition, the greater the correspondence between these two factors is.

According to Jones and Davis we learn the most from behaviours of others that lead to **non common effects**. It is assumed that any behaviour leads to some set of consequences but that the behaviour which are most helpful in forming correspondent inferences are those resulting in consequences or effects that alternative behaviorus would not have produced.

Another factor that colors the kind of attributions we make, and the confidence with which we hold them is the **social desirability** of an action. Generally, the greater the social desirability of an action or behaviour the more difficult it will be to draw a correspondent inference between act and disposition.

The Jones and Davis theory considers a somewhat different aspect of the attribution process than Kelley model of causal attribution. Kelley's model focuses on the general direction from which to draw an explanation — dispositional versus situational causes; Jones and Davis theory of correspondent inference provides

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identification of the particular characteristics and traits that underlie behaviour when dispositional attribution is made. Kelly's theory has an important advantage that it considers behaviour over an extended period of time (consistency information) whereas Jones and Davis do not take such information into account. Thus neither theory alone is able to provide a complete account of the attribution process.

Both theories do agree that people are logical, rational processors of information a view disputed by some other theorists. These theorists state that very often people are in state of mindlessness in which they simply do not think about what they are doing. People often rely on well learned patterns of behaviour that allow them to move through their daily activities. These patterns are called scripts. These scripts are used more for mundane and commonplace activities.

Self Assessment Questions

1) Define Attribution.

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2) How will you use attribution to explain the causes of behaviour?

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3) What are situational and dispositional causes?

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4) Elucidate the Covariation principle

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5) How will use behaviour to understand what others are like?

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2.6 ERRORS IN ATTRIBUTION

The basic attribution processes that we have discussed have been supported in many studies. The theories underlying these studies are similar in that they all paint a picture of human beings as thoughtful and systematic processors of information. On the other hand, people are distinctiveness psychologist that Fritz Heider described is susceptible to error. We turn now to some of the most frequent pitfalls.

2.6.1 The Fundamental Attribution Error

When we see someone acting friendly toward another person, our inclination is to assume that he or she is in fact friendly and outgoing yet that person may think of himself or herself as introverted and shy and attribute his or her friendliness to something about the situation such as earlier gregarious behaviour on the part of the person the whom he or she is acting friendly.

The situation exemplifies fundamental attribution bias. It is called fundamental because of its pervasiveness; whereby people, when acting as raters of others, tend to attribute the behaviour they view as indicative of stable trait dispositions but when acting as self raters tend to perceive their own behaviour as more affected by specific situational influences.

Why we are apt to characterise others' behaviour as due to dispositional causes yet see our own as a reflection of the situation? Part of the explanation relates to the nature of information that is available to us. When we view that behaviour of others, the information that is most perceptually salient is that which comes from the individual; typically, the environment is static and unchanging, while the person moves about—making the person the focus of attention. In contrast to people observing their own behaviour, any change in the environment is going to be most salient, and thus they are more likely to employ environmental, situational explanations.

An alternative explanation for the fundamental attribution error stems from people's desire to interact effectively with others. According to this view, observers increase their understanding and ability to make predictions about the world by differentially attending to the situation or person, depending on whether they are rating another person or themselves. For the observer, knowing the internal dispositions of others increases predictability of another's behaviour, causing observers of others to focus on those dispositions. In contrast understanding and predictability regarding appropriate behavior for people considering their own behaviour are apt to be enhanced through attention, not to themselves, but to the environment; therefore, situational factors will be attended to more carefully.

The fundamental attribution error has important applications but sometimes it may ever affect interpersonal relations negatively.

2.6.2 Halo Effects: Assuming Consistency within a Person

The halo effect is the phenomenon in which the initial familiarity that a person has positive traits is used to infer other uniformly positive characteristics. (The converse is also true; observation of a single negative trait can be used to infer the existence of uniformly negative traits.) For example, finding that a person is friendly and

clearheaded may lead us to believe that he is also helpful and sociable. Although this may be true, it is not necessarily the case. Our assumption that good traits are found together reflects our implicit personality theory, which is people's notion of what traits are found together in an individual. The halo effect is sometimes seen in media portrayals of various prominent figures.

Self Assessment Questions

1) Explain errors in attribution.

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2) What are the fundamental attribution errors?

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3) Discuss Halo effects.

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4) What is meant by assuming consistency within a person?

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**2.7 THE PERSON – POSITIVITY BIAS:
LOOKING FOR THE GOOD IN OTHERS**

This bias, which has been shown to apply to a wide range of situations, reflects the tendency to rate others in a predominantly positive way. Persons in experiments tend to elicit positive ratings and people tend to over attribute good outcomes to internal causes and bad outcomes to external causes. Public figures are usually evaluated positively. People have a tendency to view others positively. Why should this be the case? One Simple explanation is that a Pollyanna principle operates to color out perceptions (Marlin & sting, 1978). According to this view we enjoy being surrounded by a pleasant world and thus we hope a propensity to view people through rose colored glasses. This argument would be compelling

except that there are limitations to the person possibility bias. Not every person or social entity is rated favorably.

David Sears (1982) suggests that the reason for the positivity bias is that observers develop an extra degree of positive regard for individuals who are being evaluated which they do not develop when rating groups of people, even if the groups are made up of people who as individuals are evaluated positively. For example, examination of student ratings of instructors shows that college professors receive more favourable ratings as individuals than when they are rated in groups and college professors are rated more highly than the courses they teach.

It seems that we tend to relax our evaluation standards a bit when making ratings of individual human beings, but become stricter as soon as the ratings shift away from the individual. Why should this be so? Sears suggests that this tendency is related to perceived similarity. When evaluating another person we tend to assume that he or she is similar to ourselves and we are motivated to rate him or her more positively.

2.7.1 Assumptions of Similarity

As we have indicated, people not only rate in a generally positive way but they tend to assume that others are similar to themselves. This predisposition is known as the assumed similarity bias. It is particularly pronounced when obvious features such as sex and race are similar, but can even occur when there are overt differences between rater and ratee.

This phenomenon can lead to misperception of other people's personalities if they are in fact dissimilar to that of the rater. On the other hand, the assumed similarity bias can actually lead raters to appear to make very accurate judgments if the others actually are similar not because the raters are unusually astute but simply because they are categorising the others as similar to themselves. In some cases, attribution biases can make judgments more, rather than less, accurate.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) What do you understand by stating "looking for the good in others"?

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- 2) Discuss the person-positivity bias.

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3) How is assumption of similarity a bias?

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2.7.2 Attribution Theory and its Applicability in Education

Attribution theory (Weiner, 1980, 1992) is probably the most influential theory with implications for academic motivation. It emphasises the idea that learners are strongly motivated by the pleasant outcome of being able to feel good about themselves. It incorporates cognitive theory and self-efficacy theory in the sense that it emphasises that learners' current self-perceptions will strongly influence the ways in which they will interpret the success or failure of their current efforts and hence their future tendency to perform these same behaviours.

According to attribution theory, the *explanations* that people tend to make to explain success or failure can be analysed in terms of three sets of characteristics:

- 1) First, the cause of the success or failure may be *internal* or *external*. That is, we may succeed or fail because of factors that we believe have their origin within us or because of factors that originate in our environment.
- 2) Second, the cause of the success or failure may be either *stable* or *unstable*. If the we believe cause is stable, then the outcome is likely to be the same if we perform the same behaviour on another occasion. If it is unstable, the outcome is likely to be different on another occasion.
- 3) Third, the cause of the success or failure may be either *controllable* or *uncontrollable*. A controllable factor is one which we believe we ourselves can alter if we wish to do so. An uncontrollable factor is one that we do not believe we can easily alter. An *internal* factor can be controllable (we can control our effort by trying harder) or uncontrollable (most people cannot easily change their basic intellectual ability or change from being an introvert to being an extrovert). Likewise, an *external* factor can be controllable (a person failing a difficult course could succeed by taking an easier course) or uncontrollable (if calculus is difficult because it is abstract, it will still be abstract no matter what we do).

An important assumption of attribution theory is that people will interpret their environment in such a way as to maintain a positive self-image. That is, they will *attribute* their successes or failures to factors that will enable them to feel as good as possible about themselves. In general, this means that when learners succeed at an academic task, they are likely to want to attribute this success to their own efforts or abilities; but when they fail, they will want to attribute their failure to factors over which they have no control, such as bad teaching or bad luck.

The basic principle of attribution theory as it applies to motivation is that a person's own perceptions or attributions for success or failure determine the amount of effort the person will expend on that activity in the future.

There are four factors related to attribution theory that influence motivation in education: ability, task difficulty, effort, and luck. In terms of the characteristics discussed previously, these four factors can be analysed in the following way:

Ability is a relatively *internal* and *stable* factor over which the learner *does not exercise much direct control*.

Task difficulty is an *external* and *stable* factor that is *largely beyond the learner's control*.

Effort is an *internal* and *unstable* factor over which the learner *can exercise a great deal of control*.

Luck is an *external* and *unstable* factor over which the learner exercises *very little control*.

It is the learner's *perception* that determines how attributions will influence future effort. A learner may believe that he is a "lucky person" and for him luck would be an internal and stable characteristic over which he exercises little control. In other words, for this person "luck" is really what the preceding list calls an "ability" or personality characteristic.

Likewise, a person may believe that she expended a great deal of effort, when in fact she did not, or that an objectively easy task was difficult.

The basic principle of attribution theory as it applies to motivation is that *a person's own perceptions or attributions for success or failure determine the amount of effort the person will expend on that activity in the future*.

Students will be most persistent at academic tasks under the following circumstances:

- 1) If they attribute their academic *successes* to either (a) internal, unstable, factors over which they have control (e.g., effort) or (b) internal, stable, factors over which they have little control but which may sometimes be disrupted by other factors (e.g., ability disrupted by occasional bad luck);
- 2) If they attribute their *failures* to internal, unstable factors over which they have control (e.g., effort).

If we want students to persist at academic tasks, we should help them establish a sincere belief that they are competent and that occasional imperfections or failures are the result of some other factor (such as bad luck or a lack of sufficient effort) that need not be present on future occasions. (That is, *ability attributions for success* are likely to be beneficial, with the exception cited in the next guideline.)

- 3) It is *not* beneficial for students to attribute their successes *entirely* to ability. If they think they already have all the ability they need, they may feel that additional effort is superfluous. The ideal attribution for success is, "I succeeded because I am a competent person and worked hard."
- 4) When students fail, they are most likely to persist and eventually succeed if they attribute their failure to *a lack of appropriate effort*. Therefore, it is extremely important that when students perceive themselves as unsuccessful

teachers help them develop the conviction that they can still succeed if they give it their best shot. (Note that it is important to define effort appropriately, as in guideline 5.)

- 5) It is extremely hazardous to motivational health for students to fail repeatedly after making a serious effort at academic tasks. When this happens, they will either (a) stop believing they are competent, or (b) stop attributing their failure to lack of effort. Both of these outcomes are likely to reduce persistence at the academic tasks. It is important, therefore, to arrange tasks so that students who work hard are able to perceive themselves as successful.
- 6) It is important to *define effort correctly* and for the learners to *internalise* an accurate concept of effort. In practical terms effort is most usefully defined as *devoting effective academic learning time to the task*. Just trying harder or spending more time doing ineffective activities does not constitute effort. It is extremely important to make this distinction. If we use another definition of effort, when we tell children that their failures are a result of a lack of effort, we run the risk of leading them to believe that they have an internal, stable characteristic called laziness, over which they have no control. This will *reduce* motivation.
- 7) Another way to say this is that it is possible and desirable for students to believe that even though they have “worked hard,” they have not yet put forth their best effort. If we can show students ways to improve their efforts— and there are almost always ways to channel their energies more effectively - then we can enable them to have an accurate perception that increased effort is likely to pay off.
- 8) Excessively competitive grading and evaluation systems are likely to impair the learning of many students. Competition will encourage students to persist only to the extent that they believe additional effort will enable them to succeed within the competitive atmosphere. In many instances, success in competition is completely beyond the learner’s control— no matter how hard a learner works, another more competent and equally energetic competitor is likely to win.
- 9) It is useful to evaluate students at least partly (but not exclusively) on the basis of their effort. This does not mean that the weakest students in a class should receive the highest grades simply because they may spend more time trying to master the subject matter. Ideally, course assignments should be arranged so that diligent work actually leads to academic success, and the teacher’s evaluation should help students see this connection.
- 10) In general, it is best for students to believe that it is their own behaviour rather than external circumstances that leads to success or failure. Researchers refer to this as having an ***internal locus of control***. While it is good for students to have a realistic understanding of what’s happening around them, research shows that the most successful students have a tendency to *overestimate* the degree to which their own behaviour leads to success or failure.

When students have a conviction that they lack ability, it is necessary to take steps to circumvent or overcome this conviction. Such students are likely to repudiate successes. For example, when they do well, they are likely to have a sincere conviction that they were “just lucky.” It is difficult to alter this conviction. Changing

this conviction is tantamount to altering the learner's self-concept, and this cannot be accomplished in a short time.

The preceding guidelines should enable teachers to use attribution theory to motivate students more effectively. In addition, it is possible simply to reinforce effort attributions and to conduct training programs designed to promote attributions that are likely to lead to higher levels of motivation and productivity.

2.7.3 Additional Concepts Related to Attribution Theory

Attribution theory is an evolving field, and it is likely that further research will lead to additional practical insights regarding motivation. It is important to note that this discussion of attribution theory has barely scratched the surface. The following are some additional concepts related to attribution theory:

Learning goals are set by individuals who seek to increase their competence. People who emphasise learning goals are likely to seek challenges, if they believe the challenges will lead to greater competence; and they tend to respond to failure by increasing their effort. It is good to encourage students to set and pursue learning goals rather than performance goals.

Performance goals, on the other hand, are set by individuals who seek to gain favourable judgments or to avoid unfavourable judgments in the eyes of others. People who emphasise performance goals are likely to avoid challenges unless they are certain they can succeed, and they tend to respond to failure with feelings of learned helplessness and self-handicapping. It is often undesirable to emphasise performance goals; but schools, parents, and society often overemphasise them to the detriment of learners.

Learned helplessness refers to the expectation, based on previous experience, that one's actions cannot possibly lead to success. Performance goals are much more likely than learning goals to lead to ability rather than effort attributions and to result in feelings of learned helplessness. Encouraging students to focus primarily on learning goals is recommend, while keeping performance goals in perspective by enjoying recognition without letting it become an overriding concern. Teachers can accomplish this by focusing on learning rather than normative comparisons when reinforcing students, by modeling the use of learning goals, and by using the scaffolding strategies described in chapter 12 to teach effect goal setting and self-monitoring.

Self-handicapping occurs when learners create impediments that make good performance less likely. Examples of impediments include drug and alcohol use, refusing to practice, reporting excessive symptoms, and reducing effort. These impediments may sound just plain foolish, but they are very real and actually serve to protect the person's sense of self-competence. If the self-handicapping person does poorly, his explanation for this failure lies in the impediment. If the person does well, his success is exalted, because he overcame the impediment. Since the impediments interfere with learning, they have the overall effect of reducing motivation and performance. Self-handicapping is likely to become prominent during adolescence. Since it occurs most often among persons with an overriding concern with their competence image, this problem can best be minimised by focusing on effort attributions and by helping learners develop secure feelings of self-efficacy.

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Self-handicapping may be imposed or at least supported by a learner's culture or subculture or by the atmosphere of the school. For example, adolescents may handicap themselves by reducing their effort because they feel that studying hard will be viewed as an undesirable form of competition with their peers. Likewise, African-American students may reduce their effort because they resist conforming to the norms of the oppositional culture.

Expectancy-valence models state that a person's motivation to achieve a goal depends on a combination of the value of that goal (its valence) and the person's estimation of the likelihood of success. The combination of expectancy and valence interacts with attribution theory in complex ways. For example, under certain circumstances, a high probability of success can actually reduce motivation. In most cases, a person will expend more effort when there is a moderate (rather than high or low) probability of success (Atkinson, 1964).

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) What are the three sets of characteristics that can help in explanation?

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- 2) What are the four factors related attribution theory that influence motivation in education?

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- 3) What are the circumstances in which students will be most persistent in academic tasks?

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- 4) What are the additional concepts related to attribution theory?

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5) Discuss self handicapping in terms of attribution theory.

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6) What is expectancy valence models? Give examples.

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2.8 UNDERSTANDING ONE'S OWN BEHAVIOUR

Most of us would admit that we invest the most time and cognitive energy thinking about ourselves. In this section we will discuss some processor involved in thinking and understanding wheeler social object.

2.8.1 Social Comparison: Using others to Understand Oneself

According to early theorizing by Leon Festinger (1954), there is a basic drive to evaluate one's opinions and abilities- a need for social comparison. In many cases there is objective physical evidence which can provide us with answers. For instance if I think my route from home to the center of town is shorter than the route my wife takes I can objectively determine whether my opinion is correct by using my car odometer and measuring the two routes. But suppose I want to find out how good a piano player I am, here objective means are lacking.

According to Festinger, I will probably turn to social reality to satisfy my needs for evaluating my ability. Social reality refers to understanding that is derived from how other people generally think, feel and view the world. Hence, if I turn to social reality to discern my level of performance, I, illumine how others play the piano. But who is included in an individual's social reality? It wouldn't help very much to compare myself to a very dissimilar other. I already know I don't play as well as Vladimir Horowitz. For me, the most relevant information would come from similar other people who have taken lessons for about the same amount of time, who are adults, and so forth. Thus Festinger suggests that the people with whom we compare ourselves will be similar to us.

2.8.2 Knowing Our Emotions

One important outgrowth of the notion that we evaluate our abilities and opinions by comparing them with those of others is the idea that the way we identify our emotional states might also be influenced by comparison with others. In fact, a classic experiment by Stanley Scatter and Jerome singer (1962) found evidence for this hypothesis, showing that how we label our emotional experiences may new due in large part to the circumstances in which we find ourselves.

2.8.3 Bem's Self-Perception Theory

“Individuals come to know their own attitudes, emotions and internal states by inferring them from observations of their own behaviour and circumstances in which they occur. When internal cues are weak, ambiguous, or uninterpretable, the individual is in the same position as the outside observer”. (Bem, 1972)

Self-perception theory represents one of the most influential theories of how self-knowledge unfolds. Developed by social psychologist Daryl Bem self-perception theory consists of two basic claims.

- a) First the theory claims that people come to know their own attitudes, beliefs, and other internal states by inferring them from their own behaviour and the circumstances under which they occur. So a student who observes that he or she constantly reads psychology books may infer an interest in psychology.
- b) Second the theory claims that when internal cues are weak, the individual is in the same position as an outside observer who must rely upon the external cues of their behaviour to infer their own inner characteristics. In this case people's conclusion that they genuinely like psychology will be reinforced if there are no external incentives to explain their behaviour (e.g., grades), and they have no clear prior opinions regarding psychology. Thus people simply use their behaviour and the circumstances in which it occurs to infer their own beliefs and attitudes.

One reason why self-perception theory has been so influential stems from its simplicity as an explanation for how self-knowledge develops. That is people come to know themselves merely by observing their own behaviour. Beyond its simplicity, however, self-perception theory has been so influential because it provides an important contrast to the most famous psychological theory of how behaviour shapes self-knowledge: cognitive dissonance theory.

Cognitive dissonance theory assumes that people are motivated to maintain consistency between self beliefs and experience an unpleasant state of dissonance when they hold two inconsistent beliefs about the self. Thus the inconsistency between the thoughts “I do not like psychology” and “I constantly read about psychology” arouses dissonance, and people are motivated to reduce dissonance by changing one of those thoughts. The most direct way to resolve dissonance is to change the prior belief (“I do not like psychology”) to align with the behaviour (“I spend a great deal of time learning about psychology”). That is the person can resolve dissonance by making their initial attitude more favourable (I really do like psychology) and, hence, consistent with their behaviour.

There are two differences between cognitive dissonance theory and self-perception theory. First unlike cognitive dissonance theory, self-perception theory does not assume that any motivational state (e.g., dissonance reduction) is necessary for change in self-knowledge. In fact self-perception theory only requires people's willingness to infer their own attitudes and beliefs by considering the environmental and dispositional causes for their own actions for changes in self-knowledge to occur. Second self-perception theory claims that people can use their own behaviour to infer self-knowledge when the internal cues of prior beliefs are ambiguous or weak, whereas cognitive dissonance theory assumes that people adjust self-knowledge only when the internal cues of prior beliefs are clear and conflict with their freely chosen behaviour. Taken together these two differences have led psychologists to suggest that both self-perception theory and cognitive dissonance

theory can explain the adjustment of self-knowledge under different conditions. Self-perception theory explains *the creation of new self-knowledge* following behaviour *that does not conflict with clear initial self-views* whereas cognitive dissonance explains *change in existing self-knowledge* following freely chosen behaviour *that does conflict with clear initial self-views*.

The resolution of the self-perception theory versus cognitive dissonance theory debate represents one of the greatest contributions of self-perception theory. Indeed psychology only becomes better when old theories are challenged and complemented by new theories. However the contribution of self-perception theory extends beyond cognitive dissonance theory through its ability to account for a wider variety of self-attribution phenomenon. Most notably self-perception theory can explain how people develop self-knowledge from behaviour even when there is no inconsistency between prior beliefs and behaviour.

Self Assessment Questions

1) How do you use others to understand self?

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2) Why is it important to know our own emotions?

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3) Explain Bem's Self Perception theory.

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4) Discuss Cognitive Dissonance theory in this context.

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5) Compare the self perception theory and cognitive dissonance theory.

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2.9 LET US SUM UP

We have discussed the processes by which individuals come to understand both themselves and others. We focused on overall impressions are formed and attributions are made, and how such attributions ultimately influence the behaviour of the observer. Person perception refers to the way in which individuals focus on specific traits to form an overall impression of others. Central traits serve to organise a person's impression and provide a framework for interpreting information that is subsequently learned. Additive and averaging models suggested how information is combined. Impressions are also influenced by the order of information.

Schemas are organised bodies of information which allow us to organise and interpret information. Schemas related to personality traits are called prototypes. Prototypes are general personality types developed on the basis of prior experience.

Attribution theories explain how people come to understand the reasons behind their own and other's behaviour. One of the basic issues of attribution theory is concerned with whether behaviour is due to the situation or to the disposition of the person being observed. Kelly suggested that we consider three types of information to make this determination: consensus, consistency and distinctiveness. Jones and Davis's theory of correspondence inference examines how behaviour is attributed a specific underlying intention, trait or disposition. The theory states that we learn most from uncommon effects.

Attributional theory posits that people are fairly rational and logical processors of information. But, people are prone to some systematic biases like fundamental attribution error, halo effect, person-positivity bias and assumed similarity.

Research on person perception shows that we often view ourselves as social objects in a way that is analogous to what we do when perceiving others. Weiner's theory of achievement-related attributions suggests that people explain success and failure by means of two independent dimensions: internal or external and stable or unstable causes. The factors are assumed to affect both affective reactions and expectations for future success.

2.10 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you mean by additive and averaging models?
- 2) What do you mean by person perception? What is the role of schemas in person perception?
- 3) Write a note on covariation principle proposed by Harold Kelly.
- 4) "Individuals come to know their own attitudes, emotions and internal states by inferring them from observations of their own behavior and circumstances in which they occur." Explain with reference to Bem's self perception theory.
- 5) What are the errors in attribution that people generally make in understanding other's behaviour?
- 6) What are the educational implications of Weiner's attribution theory? Explain.

2.11 GLOSSARY

Central traits	: traits that play an unusually large role in determining a general impression. Central traits serve to organise the impression and provide a framework for interpreting information that is received subsequently.
The additive model	: we simply add together the bits of information we have about a person to form a judgment.
The averaging model	: we divide the acquired information by the number of traits and average.
Primacy effect	: the condition in which early information has a stronger impact than later information.
Recency effect	: the condition when later information is given more credence than early information.
Schemas	: organised bodies of information stored in memory. The information in a schema provides a representation of the way in which social world operates as well as allowing us to categorise and interpret new information related to the schema.
Prototypes	: the personality types that we derive in the case of person perception are organised into schemas known as prototypes .
Attribution	: an individual's understanding of the reasons behind peoples' behaviour.
Attribution theory	: concerned with how individuals interpret events and how this relates to their thinking and behaviour.
Covariation principle	: the cause that will be chosen to explain an effect is a cause that is present when the effect is present, and absent when the effect is also absent.
Consensus	: the degree to which other people react similarly in the same situation.
Consistency	: the degree to which the actor behaves the same way in other situations.
Distinctiveness	: refers to the extent to which the same behaviour occurs in relation to other people or stimuli.
Correspondent inferences	: observers' ideas of how closely and overt behaviour or action represents a specific underlying intention trait or dispositions. The more behaviour appears to reflect the underlying disposition, the greater the correspondence between these two factors is.

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- Non-common effects** : the behaviours which are most helpful in forming correspondent inferences are those resulting in consequences or effects that alternative behaviours would not have produced.
- Fundamental attribution error** : people tend to attribute the behaviour of others to stable trait dispositions, but tend to view their own behaviour as more affected by specific situational influences.
- Halo effect** : the phenomenon in which the initial familiarity that a person has positive traits is used to infer other uniformly positive characteristics. The converse is also true; observation of a single negative trait can be used to infer the existence of uniformly negative traits.
- Social reality** : refers to understanding that is derived from how other people generally think, feel and view the world.

2.12 SUGGESTED READINGS

Baron, R. A. and Byrne, D. (1997). *Social Psychology*, 8th edition. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon

Feldman, R. S. (1985) *Social Psychology: Theories, Research and Applications*. McGrawHill Book Company : New York

Berkowitz, L. (1986) *A Survey of Social Psychology*. CBS Publishing: New York

UNIT 3 METHODS OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Social Psychological Approach: Needs and Aims
- 3.3 Methods: Formulating the Investigation
 - 3.3.1 Methods of Data Collection
 - 3.3.2 Methods of Analysis
 - 3.3.2.1 Observational Method
 - 3.3.2.2 Correlational Method
 - 3.3.2.3 Experimental Method
 - 3.3.2.4 Quasi Experimental Method
 - 3.3.2.5 Experimental Designs
 - 3.3.3 Threats to the Validity in Experimental Research
- 3.4 Ethnography
 - 3.4.1 Characteristics of Ethnography
 - 3.4.2 Steps in Ethnography Method
 - 3.4.3 Other Methods in Ethnography
 - 3.4.4 Evaluation
- 3.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.6 Unit End Questions
- 3.7 Glossary
- 3.8 Suggested Readings and References

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Procedures for gathering information in any discipline are known as methods. The term methodology is used to refer to all aspects of the implementation of methods. Methodology for any discipline involves the development of procedures for making various kinds of observations which provide the building blocks for theories and generalisations. In this unit we will be dealing with the needs and aims as related to social psychology research. We will also be putting forward the methods of research in social psychology. Following this we will, be dealing with ethnography as a method in social psychology research. Finally we will impress upon the need for evaluation and how it is to be done.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

Define social psychology research

- 1 Describe the various characteristic features of the social psychology methodology;

- 1 Explain the Needs and aims of social psychological research;
- 1 Differentiate between common sense explanations and scientific explanations;
- 1 Differentiate between the theoretical and applied research;
- 1 Analyse Various methods used in social psychology; and
- 1 Explain meta analysis.

3.2 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH: NEEDS AND AIMS

As a Scientific discipline social psychology embraces following three operations:

- 1) Careful collection of observation or data.
- 2) Ordered integration of these observations into hypotheses and theories.
- 3) Tests of adequacy of these hypothesis and theories in terms of whether they can successfully predict future observations.

Each of these steps is indispensable if social psychology is to achieve mature status as an empirical science. As a method, empiricism advocates the collection and evaluation of data. Experimentation is the main source of empirical research. It is primarily guided by induction from observations rather than by deduction from theoretical constructs. Induction is process of reasoning in which general principle are inferred from specific cases. The experimental method is basically inductive in nature as the conclusions about populations are drawn from observations of individuals and small groups. The term '*data*' is a Latin word which means 'given'. The singular form '*datum*' refers to a single isolated fact. Since one isolated fact is of limited value in developing an understanding of the world, scientists usually deal with sets of observations described by '*data*'.

How do we gain an understanding of human behaviours? There could be many ways. One might ask why people act as they do? And try to uncover their innermost thought and fantasies, read the works of great novelists and playwrights and by eminent philosophers and take part in the situation of interest. All these methods can yield valuable insight into people and social psychology has at times drawn ideas from all of them. How do we come to judge the accuracy of statements about human behaviours on the basis of these methods? For instance, consider the effect of violence in movies and television. Educators, public health authorities, broadcasters and behavioural scientists have long been concerned about their possible effects. There are two prevalent views— one group believes it harmful and states that violence in mass media increases the chances that the viewers will react aggressively. Others believe that violent scenes might be socially beneficial by draining the viewers' pent-up aggressive urges. Which of these should be taken as acceptable position on this socially significant subject? The validity of a statement is verified by relying on authorities. But the problem in this regard is, 'who is most qualified person'. Experts even disagree and we may find people on all sides; even authorities can be wrong at times.

Common sense is often relied upon to evaluate various ideas and actions. Common sense is usually based on widely shared experiences. But belief based on common sense can be wrong. Berkowitz (1986:27) has discussed an example from the

history of science, “what if you had two large balls, one a heavy bowling ball and the other same size but much lighter in weight and dropped both of them from the roof of a tall building? Common sense says that the heavier ball will reach the ground first. But in the late 16th century Stevin and Galileo demonstrated that bodies do not fall with velocities proportional to their weights.”

Some other problems with common sense are events may not happen in accord to our experience and erroneous tendency to believe that we know something all along.

The other problem in understanding events and things is distorted perceptions. Our perception of events in the environment can be in error. People often look at complex and ambiguous situation with preconceptions. Experiences and certain expectations also affect our perceptions. In 1966 Robert Rosenthal published a review of some of the notable mistakes that have been made in the history of science because of erroneous perceptions. One example was from Newton’s research. Sir Isaac Newton failed to see certain lines in the solar spectrum produced when a glass of prism was held in front of a beam of light evidently because his theory did not anticipated those lines. “Our assumptions define and limit what we see, i.e. we tend to see things in such way that they will fit in with our assumptions even if this involve distortion or omission” (Johnson cited in Rosenthal, 1966: 6).

There is another problem of social psychological research is replication. Validity of an abstract statement is increased if the observations on which it is based are also reported by other qualified persons. Reproducibility is the most important criterion of a science. Other investigators must be able to duplicate the observations that are taken as a support of that idea.

Self Assessment Questions

1) What are the three operations that social psychology embraces?

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2) What are the social psychology methods through which one gains understanding of human behaviour?

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3) What is common sense based on to understand human behaviour?

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4) How do distorted perceptions affect understanding events?

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3.3 METHODS: FORMULATING THE INVESTIGATION

Every scientific investigation begins with a question. The question can be dictated by a practical problem or grow out of theoretical interest.

The difference between theoretical and applied research is not a qualitative one but rather a matter of degree (Feldman 1985: 21). Pure theoretical work in social psychology is aimed at the building of a basic body of knowledge and facts about the social world. While applied research is meant to provide immediate solutions to immediate problems. But both researches have relevance for each other.

Results of even the most applied studies are invariably used not only for their immediate applications to the problem at hand but also for their implication for theory. On the other hand, theories are able to suggest new approaches and strategies for dealing with the problems of society. But there is a difference of methods in theoretical and applied research. Theoretical studies are mostly conducted in laboratories using experiment and applied researches are based on natural field settings.

But the goal for both of them is same, “building knowledge, a concern regarding the quality of life and an interest in how knowledge of social psychology is ultimately utilised” (Feldman). While the paths to these goals may differ, depending on the orientation of a particular social psychologist, the interaction between theory and research is well recognised today. “Many psychologists working in an applied field are keenly aware of the need for close cooperation between theoretical and applied psychology. This can be accomplished in psychology.....if the theorist does not look toward applied problems with high brow aversion or with a fear of social problems, and if the applied psychologist realizes that there is nothing so practical as a good theory” (Lewin 1951: 169).

The methods can be subdivided into two groups, viz., methods of data collection and methods of analysis.

3.3.1 Methods of Data Collection

Observations, the study of documents, questionnaire, interviews, testing and experiment etc.

3.3.2 Methods of Analysis

Statistical Methods: Correlational, Factor analysis

Logical and theoretical: Constructs of typology, various means of explanations etc.

Our discussion will be limited to following methods:

- 1 Observational method
- 1 Correlation method
- 1 Experimental method
- 1 Ethnography

3.3.2.1 Observational Method

Observation is the old method of social psychology. Many writers have used different terms and categories for this method like method of systematic observation (Morgan and King), direct observation (Hilgard and Atkinson) and Feldman has included it in field study.

Observation is to simply observe the phenomena under study as it occur naturally (Hilgard and Atkinson 2003: 21)

This method plays a very important role in the collection of data on overt behaviour and the actions of individuals. The main problem involved in the application of this method include, what to observe? How to fixate the observations? How to structure observation? What should be the units of observation in social psychological research, and the definite interval of time for observation?

This method proceeds in following two stages:

Describing behaviour: This methods starts with the observation of behaviours in natural setting that is relevant for the research. The observation may be based on the questions like what do people do? Can various behaviours be classified in systematic ways? How do people differ in their behaviors?

From description to causes: The method of systematic observation tells us what do people do and how they differ in their behaviours. It may also be used to find out what caused the observed behaviours. But one should to be cautious in inferring causes from observation as

A behaviour may have many causes

The fact that an event comes before another event do not show that the first event is the cause of the latter one.

To establish likely causes of even simple behaviour, a number of observations would be required.

For more complex behaviours, establishing likely cause is much more difficult.

Thus to find out the course of a particular behaviours, we must look carefully at the result of many observations, noting the effects of a particular factor.

Observational method can be relatively informal and unstructured or it can be formal and structured. But the object in each case in the same, “to abstract information from the complex flux of social behaviours that are of potential significance to the research questions; and to record each instance of such actions over some period” (Manstead A.S. R. Semin G.R. 2001: 97).

The nature of research setting or topic dictates that observation is conducted in a relatively informal and unstructured manner with the researcher posing as a member of the group being observed. A Classical example of research employing this method is Festinger, Riecken and Schachter's (1956) study of the consequences of blatant disconfirmation of strongly held beliefs. The investigators identified a religious sect which predicted that the northern hemisphere would be destroyed by flood on a certain date. By joining that sect, members of the research team were able to observe what happened when the predicted events failed to materialise? This is called participant observation. In such observation researcher participate in the ongoing activities of the people being observed.

Formal methods of observation can be used when it is possible to record actions relevant to the research question without disturbing the occurrence of behaviour.

In non-participant observation observers record people's behaviour but do not actually participates in their activities.

The most formal type of observational methods is one in which the researcher uses a predetermined category system for scoring social behaviors. Bales' (1950) Interaction Process analysis (IPA) is a well known example. Such a system was developed to study interaction in small groups. The verbal exchanges between group members are coded in terms of 12 predetermined categories. The scores of group members can then be used to determine who the leader of the group is.

Observational methods of data collection have two main advantages over the self report methods. They can often be made without disturbing the naturally occurring behaviours. Even where people know that they are being observed, enacting behavior may be quite engrossing.

Nevertheless, there are some types of behaviours that are either impossible to observe directly (because they took place in the past) or difficult to observe directly (because they are normally enacted in private). Moreover, social psychologists are often interested in measuring people's perceptions, cognitions or evaluations, none of which can be directly assessed simply through observation. For these self-report measures or other techniques are often used.

3.3.2.2 Correlation Method

Correlation is a relationship between two (or more) variables such that systematic increase or decrease in the magnitude of one variable is accompanied by systematic increase or decrease in the magnitude of the others" (Reber & Reber, 2001: 158).

Correlational investigations try to determine, 'what is the relationship among the variables of interest to the researcher?' The question is asked, 'as something changes in amount, how do other things vary? One may ask if wealthier people were happier than those who had little money.

A Correlational study of the connection between income and happiness thus inquires whether more money is associated with greater happiness (Positive correlation), or with lower happier (a negative correlation) or does not go along with happiness (a zero correlation). The degree of relationship is assessed mathematically and is expressed as a correlation coefficient ranging from +1.00

to -1.00. A positive correlation indicates that the scores on the two variables move in the same direction; as the scores rise (or fall) on one variable, they also rise or fall on the other variable. A negative correlation indicates that the score move in opposite directions: an increase in the scores on one variable is accompanied by a decrease in scores on the other. The magnitude of the obtained correlation reflects the degree of this relationship. The plus sign indicates a positive relation and the minus sign a negative correlation. The closer a correlation value comes to positive or negative 1.00, the stronger the relationship between two variables.

One of the most important points in understanding the result of correlation research is that finding a correlation between two variables does not in any way imply that two are linked causally. It may be that one variable causes the changes in the other, but it is just as plausible that it does not. It is even possible that some third, unmeasured and previously unconsidered variable is causing both variables to increase or decrease simultaneously. We can take the example of the possible relationship between television violence and viewer aggression. Because in most cases it is difficult to control adult viewers' television viewing habits, researcher must carry out correlation studies in which the aggressive content of television programs viewed by an individual is compared with the degree of aggressive behaviour that person carries out.

Suppose the results are supportive of the hypothesis that high aggressive content is associated with high viewer aggression and that low aggressive content is associated with low viewer aggression. Drawing the conclusion that aggressive behaviour caused the aggression would be inappropriate and quite possibly inaccurate.

It follows, then that although the use of correlation techniques allow us to learn what associations exist between two variables, it does not inform us about causality.

However there are some circumstances under which we could make reasonable inferences about the causal direction (Berkowitz), but their results may be only inferences and far from conclusive. We have to turn to other methods to ascertain causal relationship. Experimental techniques are generally the preferred means of doing such research. Still, in instances in which experiments cannot be conducted, correlational method can provide valuable information. We can compare both the methods on the following attributes:

Table: Comparing Correlational and Experimental Research Methods

Attributes	Correlational Research	Experimental Research
Independent Variable	Varies Naturally	Controlled by researcher
Unambiguous causality	Yes	No
Exploratory	Often	Usually not
Random Assignment	No	Yes
Theory Testing	Often	Usually
Tests many relationships	Usually	Usually Not

Self Assessment Questions

1) What are social psychology methods for formulating investigations?

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2) What are the two divisions into which methods are subdivided?

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3) What are the methods of data collection?

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4) Discuss observational method in detail.

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5) Discuss the correlational method. What are its advantages over observational method?

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3.3.2.3 Experimental Method

Experimentation has been the dominant research method in social psychology, mainly because it is without equal as a method for testing theories that predict causal relationships between variables.

The goal of an experiment is to see what happens to a phenomenon, such as obedience, when the researcher deliberately modifies some features of the environment in which the phenomenon occurs (that is, if variable A is changed, will there be resulting changes in B). We can see the meanings of some basic concepts

of the experimental research in the table given below. We will focus our discussion on the experiments in social psychology.

Table: Terminology in Experimental Research

Experiment	<i>A well controlled test of hypothesis about cause and effect.</i>
Hypothesis	<i>A statement about cause and effect that can be tested</i>
Variable	<i>Something that can occur with different values and can be measured</i>
Independent Variable	<i>A variable that represents the hypothesised cause that is precisely controlled by the experimenter and independent of what the participant does</i>
Dependent Variable	<i>A variable that represents the hypothesised effect whose values ultimately depend on the value of the independent variable</i>
Experimental Group	<i>A group in which the hypothesised cause is present</i>
Control Group	<i>A group in which the hypothesised effect is present</i>
Statistics	<i>Mathematical techniques for determining the certainty with which a sample of data can be used to draw generalisations</i>
Measurement	<i>A system for assigning numbers to different values of variables</i>
Random Assignment	<i>A system for assigning participants to experimental and control groups so that each participant has as equal chance of being assigned to any group</i>

Source: Atkinson & Hilgard et al (2003) Introduction to Psychology 14th edition. Wadsworth Asia Pvt Ltd.

There are two basic types of experiments in social psychology laboratory and natural laboratory and natural experiments have their particular rules. The laboratory experiment is of particular interest in social psychological discussions.

Social psychologists use some variations. Two of the most common of these variations are the quasi-experiments and the true randomized experiments. These two methods differ with respect to realism of the setting in which data are collected, and the degree of control that the researcher has over that setting.

3.3.2.4 Quasi-experimental Method

Quasi-experiment is conducted in a natural, everyday life setting, over which the researcher has less than complete control. The lack of control over the setting arises from the very fact that it is an everyday life setting. Here the realism of the setting is relatively high, the control relatively low.

The true randomized experiment by contrast is one in which the researcher has complete control over key features of the setting. However, this degree of control often involves a loss of realism. It is sometimes possible to conduct a true randomized experiment in an everyday setting; this is called a field experiment.

Table: Comparison of Experiments and Quasi Experiments

Attributes	Experiments	Quasi-experiments
Representativeness of data	Low	Low
Realism of setting	Low	High
Control over setting	High	Medium

As an example we take the problem, whether exposure to violent film and television material has an impact on the subsequent behaviour of the viewer. This issue can be studied using true randomized experiments or quasi-experiments.

An example of a true experiment on this issue is the study of reported by Liebert and Baron (1972). Male and female children in two age groups were randomly allocated to one of two experimental conditions, one in which they viewed an excerpt from a violent television program and another in which they viewed an exciting athletics race. Later both groups of children were given the opportunity to hurt another child. Those who had seen the violent material were more likely to use this opportunity than were those who had seen the non-violent material. As the children had been allocated to the violent and non-violent conditions randomly, the observed difference can be attributed with confidence to the difference in type of material seen, rather than any difference in the type of children who saw the material.

An example of quasi-experimental study of the same issue is the study reported by Black and Bevan (1992) They asked people to complete a short questionnaire measure of tendency to engage in aggressive behaviour under one of the four conditions: while waiting in line outside a cinema to see a violent movie; while waiting in line to see a non-violent movie; having just seen a violent movie and having just seen a non-violent movie. The researcher found that those waiting to see the violent film had higher aggression scores than those waiting to see the non-violent film; those who had just seen the violent film scored higher than those who had just seen a non-violent film.

While this pattern of finding is consistent with the conclusion that viewing a violent movie increases the tendency to aggress, the fact that participants were not allocated at random to the different conditions of the study means that other explanations cannot be ruled out.

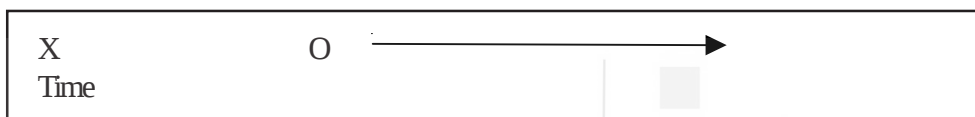
The strength of the experiment is its capability to draw causal inferences concerning the observed relationship between independent and dependent variables. The artificial setting is its major drawback. Major strength of the quasi- experiment is that it can be conducted under relatively natural conditions. But quasi experiment is inferior to true experiment in drawing causal conclusions.

Often the only way in which to conduct an experimental study of a social phenomenon is via a quasi-experiment. Ethical and practical considerations frequently make it impossible to allocate people randomly to different experimental conditions. For instance, to study the effects of bereavement, research participants

cannot be allocated to bereaved and non-bereaved condition. The same problem applies in many other fields of research, viz. social interventions, such as new teaching methods in schools, new ways of treating those who are suffering from physical or psychological disorders, new public information campaigns and new management techniques; people are not randomly assigned to participate or not to participate in these programs.

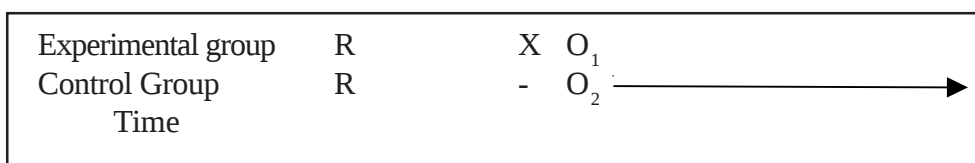
3.3.2.5 Experimental Designs

In an experiment, it is important that (1) the experimenter keep all theoretically irrelevant features of the experimental setting constant, manipulating just the key independent variable; and (2) that participants are allocated randomly to the different conditions of an experiment. Experimental designs are used so that the above goals are fulfilled. The first called one shot case study. Followings Cook and Campbell (1979) we shall use symbol 'X' to stand for a manipulations (of the independent variable) and the symbol 'O' to stand for observations (i.e., the dependent variable). In these terms the one shot design looks like this:



For example, an educational researcher wanted to know the effect of a new teaching method on learning. The researcher takes a class of students, introduces the new method (X), and measures the student's comprehension of the taught material (O). There is nothing with which X is compared. One shot case study is a research design in which observations are made on a group after some event has occurred or some manipulation has been introduced. There is nothing with which these observations may be compared. So one has no way of knowing whether the event or manipulation had an effect.

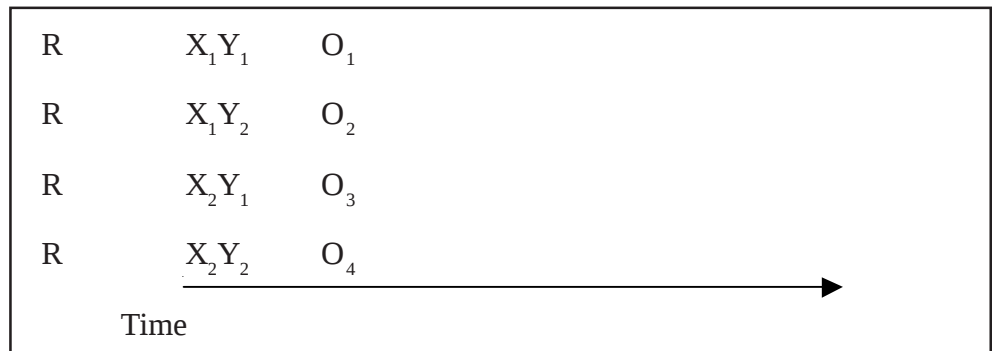
A true experimental design is known as Post test only control group design. In this type of design participants are allocated randomly to one of the two groups. One group is exposed to the independent variable (experimental group) and the other is not (control group). Both groups are assessed on the independent variable and the comparison of the two groups on this measure indicates whether or not the independent variable had an effect. Let R stand for random assignment of participants to conditions, and X and O stand for manipulation and observation. The design looks like this.



In the previous example, the researcher might compare one group of students who have been exposed to new teaching method with respect to their comprehension of the taught material. In this design participants are randomly allocated to the two conditions which ruled out the possibility that differences between O₁ and O₂ are due to the differences between the two groups of participants. If O₁ and O₂ differ markedly, it is reasonable to infer that this difference is caused by X.

There are many types of experimental designs used in social psychology, more sophisticated and complex than the above. Each design represents a more complete attempt to rule out the possibility that observed difference between conditions result from something other than the manipulation of independent variable

A common design in social psychological experiment is the factorial experiment, in which two or more independent variables are manipulated within the same study. The simplest case can be represented diagrammatically as follows, where R stands for random assignment of participants to conditions, X stands for a variable with two levels (X_1 and X_2) and Y stands for another variable with two levels (Y_1 and Y_2).



This design contains all possible combinations of the independent variables. In the design shown above, each independent variable has two levels, resulting in four conditions (2×2), which can be added further (3×3 , $2 \times 2 \times 2$) etc. The main benefit of a factorial design is that it allows the researcher to examine the separate and combined effects of two or more independent variables. The separate effects of each of the independent variable are known as main effects. Interaction effect is a term used when combined effects of two (or more) independent variables in a factorial experiment yield a pattern that differs from the sum of the main effects.

3.3.3 Threats to the Validity in Experimental Research

Validity refers to the extent to which a method of measurement measures what it is supposed to measure. Experimental research attempts to maximise each of three types of validity (1) Internal validity (2) Construct validity (3) External Validity. The validity of an experiment may be threatened due to the following reasons:

- i) **Confounding:** The inference of causality is affected by confounded variables. In experimental work, it is the failure to separate two variables with the result that their effects cannot be independently ascertained. If in an experiment on memory and age all the older participants are female and all the younger are male, then sex and age are 'confounded' and the memory data cannot be properly interpreted.
- ii) **Social desirability** is a term used to describe the fact that participants are usually keen to be seen in a positive light and may therefore be reluctant to provide honest reports of fears, anxieties, feelings of hostility or prejudice or any other quality which they think would be regarded negatively.
- iii) **Demand characteristics** are ones in the experimental setting which convey the participant the nature of the experimenter's hypothesis. Individuals who know that they are being studied will often be curious about what the experimenter is looking at and what types of responses are expected. Participants may then attempt to provide the expected responses in order to please the experimenter. When the behavior is enacted with the intention of fulfilling the experimenter's hypothesis, it is said to be a response to the demand characteristics of the experiment.

- iii) **Experimenter expectancy effect** – refers to the experimenter's own hypothesis or expectation about the outcome of the research. It increases the likelihood that the participants will behave in such a way as to confirm the hypothesis.

There are certain ways to minimise these effects. Some of these are:

- i) *Post experimental enquiry*: A technique advocated by Orne (1962, 1969) for detecting the operation of demand characteristics. The participant is carefully interviewed after participation in an experiment. The purpose is to elicit from the participants what he or she believed to be the aim of the experiment; and the extent to which this belief affected his behaviour in the experiment.
- ii) *Unobtrusive measures (also called non-reactive measure)*: Measures that the participant is not aware of; and which therefore cannot influence his or her behaviour. Social desirability effects can be reduced by these measures. The point is that the participants do not know what it is that is being measured and they will be unable to modify their behaviour.
- iii) *Cover story*: a cover story is a false but supposedly plausible explanation of the purpose of an experiment. The intention is to limit the operation of demand characteristics. However, an unconvincing story can create more problems than it solves, raising doubts in the mind of the participant that otherwise may not have arisen.
- iv) *Another strategy* to reduce experimenter expectancy effect is to keep the experimenter blind to the hypothesis under test or at least blind to the condition to which a given participant has been allocated.

Other possibilities to reduce experimenter expectancy effect include minimising the interaction between experimenter and participants and automating the experiment as far as possible. The goal is to reduce the opportunity for the experimenter to communicate his or her expectancies.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Define experimental method.

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- 2) Define each of the terminologies used in experimental method.

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3) What is Quasi-experimental method? Discuss its characteristics.

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4) Compare experimental with quasi-experimental method

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5) Discuss experimental designs with illustrations.

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6) List out the threats to the validity of experimental research.

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3.4 ETHNOGRAPHY

The word ethnography literally means writing about peoples. *Ethnos* in Greek means folk or people and *graphia* stands for writing. “Ethnography literally means ‘a portrait of a people.’ Ethnography is a written description of a particular culture: the customs, beliefs, and behaviour, based on information collected through fieldwork” (Marvin Harris and Orna Johnson, 2000).

“Ethnography is the art and science of describing a group or culture. The description may be of a small tribal group in an exotic land or a classroom in middle-class suburbia” (David M. Fetterman, 1998).

Ethnography is a qualitative research method. It has its roots in anthropology and sociology and in recent years has become a model for research in social psychology. Ethnography is a basic form of social research involving making observations, gaining data from informants, constructing hypotheses and acting upon them. The ethnographer participates actively in the research environment but does not structure it. Its approach is discovery based, the aim being to depict the activities and perspectives of actors.

“Ethnography is concerned with the experience as it is felt or undergone. To do

this, the ethnographer participates in people's daily lives for a period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions, studying documents, in other words collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues with which the research is concerned" (Banister et al 1994: 34). Ethnography is a multimethod form of research. Participant observation forms the base method. Interviewing and action research are later stages.

Its success as a method depends on its ability to make a reader understand 'what goes in a society or a social circumstance as well the participants.' Psychologically ethnography is very interesting in itself, in that it bears a close resemblance to the routine ways in which people make sense of their world in everyday life. But its formalised multimethod form differentiates it from everyday sense making. The multimethod approach reduces the risks that can stem from reliance on a single kind of data, allowing the researcher to compare data collected by different methods.

Present-day practitioners conduct ethnographies in organisations and communities of all kinds. Ethnographers study schooling, public health, rural and urban development, consumers and consumer goods, any human arena. While particularly suited to exploratory research, ethnography draws on a wide range of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, moving from "learning" to "testing" while research problems, perspectives and theories emerge and shift.

3.4.1 Characteristics of Ethnography

Ethnography is characterised by

- 1 Gathering data from the range of sources, e.g. interviews, observations, conversations and documents.
- 1 Studying behaviour in everyday contexts rather than experimental conditions.
- 1 Using an unstructured approach to data gathering in the early stages, so that key issues can emerge gradually through analysis.
- 1 Comprising an in-depth study of one or two situations.

3.4.2 Steps in Ethnographic Method

Steps:

- 1) Ethnographer starts with selection of a culture, review of the literature pertaining to the culture and identification of variables.
- 2) The ethnographer then goes about gaining entrance, which in turn sets the stage for *cultural immersion* of the ethnographer in the culture. It is not unusual for ethnographers to live in the culture for months or even years.
- 3) The middle stages of the ethnographic method involve gaining informants, using them to gain yet more informants in a chaining process, and gathering data in the form of observational transcripts and interview recordings.
- 4) Data analysis and theory development come at the end, though theories may emerge from cultural immersion and theory-articulation by members of the culture.

However, the ethnographic researcher strives to avoid theoretical preconceptions and instead to induce theory from the perspectives of the members of the culture and from observation.

The researcher may seek validation of induced theories by going back to members of the culture for their reaction.

Ethnographic methodologies vary and some ethnographers advocate use of structured observation schedules by which one may code observed behaviours or cultural artefacts for purposes of later statistical analysis.

3.4.3 Other Methods of Ethnography

Macro-ethnography is the study of broadly-defined cultural groupings, such as “the Indians”.

Micro-ethnography is the study of narrowly-defined cultural groupings, such as “young working class women” or “members of Congress.”

Emic perspective is the ethnographic research approach to the way the members of the given culture perceive their world. The emic perspective is usually the main focus of ethnography.

Etic perspective is the ethnographic research approach to the way non-members (outsiders) perceive and interpret behaviours and phenomena associated with a given culture.

Situational reduction refers to the view of ethnographers that social structures and social dynamics emerge from and may be reduced analytically to the accumulated effects of micro situational interactions (Collins, 1988). Put another way, the cosmos is best understood in microcosm.

Symbols, always a focus of ethnographic research, are any material artefact of a culture, such as art, clothing, or even technology. The ethnographer strives to understand the cultural connotations associated with symbols. Technology, for instance, may be interpreted in terms of how it relates to an implied plan to bring about a different desired state for the culture.

Cultural patterning is the observation of cultural patterns forming relationships involving two or more symbols. Ethnographic research is *holistic*, believing that symbols cannot be understood in isolation but instead are elements of a whole. One method of patterning is *conceptual mapping*, using the terms of members of the culture themselves to relate symbols across varied forms of behaviour and in varied contexts. Another method is to focus on *learning processes*, in order to understand how a culture transmits what it perceives to be important across generations. A third method is to focus on *sanctioning processes*, in order to understand which cultural elements are formally (ex., legally) prescribed or proscribed and which are informally prescribed or proscribed, and of these which are enforced through sanction and which are unenforced.

Tacit knowledge is deeply-embedded cultural beliefs which are assumed in a culture’s way of perceiving the world, so much so that such knowledge is rarely or never discussed explicitly by members of the culture, but rather must be inferred by the ethnographer.

Ethnographic researchers recognise that they are part of the social world they study and that they cannot avoid having an effect on the social phenomena being studied, “...rather than engaging in futile attempts to eliminate the effects of the researcher, we should set about understanding them” (Hammersley and Atkinson).

Meta analysis

As a number of studies on a particular topics increase, researchers are confronted with a new problem: how to synthesize research findings to arrive at general conclusions. Consider work on sex differences in helping behavior. Eagly and Crowley (1986) identified no fewer than 172 separate studies that investigated male and female differences in helping behaviour. How are researchers to handle this ever increasing quantity of empirical research?

In recent years statistical techniques called meta-analysis have been developed to help researchers review and synthesize empirical findings systematically. The first step is for the researcher to find as many studies as possible on the same topic. The meta-analysis uses statistical methods to pool information from all available studies. The goal is to arrive at an overall estimate of the size of the finding. In Meta analysis, statistics are also used to test for the consistency (homogeneity) of findings across studies. When results from different studies are found to be highly consistent, researches can have much confidence in findings. When results of studies differ, meta analysis techniques direct researchers to look for other important factors.

Meta analysis is an important tool for understanding the social psychological research, and so for understanding social behavior and social cognition. As noted by Myers (1991) meta-analysis reviews can help counteract our tendency to be unduly influenced by the results of one or a few studies that are especially interesting or ingenious, since such reviews combine the findings of many studies by statistical formula.

3.4.4 Evaluation

In the preceding sections we discussed various methods and importance of the precise process of investigations. But sometimes strict adherence to scientific procedures creates problem for social psychology.

In social psychology we study the psychological characteristics of large groups and mass processes where other than pure scientific methods are required. In these methods the problem is raised by whether the information is subjective or objective.

The source of information is always man. There are certain ways by which the reliability of the information is ensured to overcome shortcomings of our methods. The reliability of information is reached through the verification the reliability of the data collecting instruments. Three characteristics of the reliability of information are ensured in every instance: validity, stability and precision.

The other problem is related to the processing of the material. “To what degree is the researcher allowed to include considerations of both logic and content theory in the interpretation of data?” (Andreyeva 1990: 57).

Thus the main task for a science to be human is to find the means through which

social context can be grasped in every concrete study. It is important to see the problem, understand that value judgments inescapably exist in investigations carried out within the framework of sciences like social psychology, and that the researcher should not avoid the problem but should consciously determine his social position.

Before the beginning of an investigation, before the choice of method is made, the basic outline of the research must be precisely defined, and the goal of the research and its premises must be thoroughly thought out.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Define and discuss ethnography as a method of social psychology research.

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- 2) What are the characteristic features of ethnographic method?

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- 3) Elucidate the steps in ethnographic method in social psychology research.

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- 4) Discuss the various other methods in ethnography.

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- 5) What is evaluation? Why is it important?

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6) What are the methods used in evaluation of a social psychology research?

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3.5 LET US SUM UP

Procedures for gathering information in any discipline are known as methods. Validity of statements about human behaviour and events is verified by relying on authorities and common sense. But these methods can give us explanations often rejected on logical grounds. In social psychology various methods are used dictated by our problem of investigation. Methods of data collection are observations, the study of documents, questionnaire, interviews, testing and experiment etc. Methods of analysis can be statistical (correlation, Factor analysis) or logical and theoretical (viz. constructs of typology, various means of explanations). Observational method is mostly used for data collection, correlational method is an analytic method whereby the relationship between two or more variables is assessed. Experimental method is the preferred method to study cause and effect relations between the independent variable and dependent variable, ethnography is method that uses multiple methods-the purpose is to write about the behaviour of people as and when it occur and no attempts to be objective are made, the observers point of view is important in this method, and currently meta analysis is used to synthesize the findings of many researches on a topic.

Before researching on social psychological problems the basic goal and outline should be precisely worked out. The choice of method depends on nature of our problem. On the whole, researchers have to keep in mind that social reality and context should not left out of the whole exercise. The essence of the research should not be lost for the sake of scientific rigor.

3.6 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you mean by an empirical science? Is social psychology an empirical science? Give two reasons.
- 2) What do understand by observation method? Give its advantages and disadvantages.
- 3) Write an essay on correlational method (500 words).
- 4) What is an experiment? Differentiate between laboratory experiment and quasi experiment.
- 5) Differentiate between correlational and experimental method.
- 6) What is meta-analysis? What is the importance of meta-analysis in social psychological research?
- 7) What do you mean by main effect and interactional effect in experimental method terminology?

- 8) Differentiate between control group and experimental group.
- 9) What do you mean by ethnographic research? What is the importance of ethnographic research for social psychology?
- 10) Write the ways in which threats to the validity of an experiment could be worked out.

3.7 GLOSSARY

Method	: procedures for gathering information in any discipline are known as methods.
Methodology	: refers to all aspects of the implementation of methods.
Induction	: process of reasoning in which general principle are inferred from specific cases.
Observation	: to observe the phenomena under study as it occur naturally.
Participant observation	: observation in which a researcher participates in the ongoing activities of the people being observed.
Non-participant observation	: observer records people's behaviour but do not participates in their activities.
Reactivity	: Observers' tendency to evoke reactive behaviour on the part of those being observed.
Correlation	: a relationship between two (or more) variables such that systematic increase or decrease in the magnitude of one variable is accompanied by systematic increase or decrease in the magnitude of the others.
Experiment	: A well controlled test of hypothesis about cause and effect.
Ethnography	: a written description of a particular culture (the customs, beliefs and behaviour) based on information collected through fieldwork.
Meta-Analysis	: A method to review and synthesize empirical findings systematically.

3.8 SUGGESTED READINGS AND REFERENCES

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Suggested Reading

Mook, D. C. (2001) *Psychological Research: The Ideas Behind the Methods*. W. W. Norton & Company: New York, London

UNIT 4 CURRENT TRENDS IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY AND ETHICAL ISSUES

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Social Psychology Applications
 - 4.2.1 Population Psychology
 - 4.2.2 Health Psychology
 - 4.2.3 Environmental Psychology
 - 4.2.4 Industrial Organisational Psychology
 - 4.2.5 Legal System and Social Psychology
- 4.3 Growing Influence of Cognitive Perspective
- 4.4 Multicultural Perspective
- 4.5 Sociobiology and Evolutionary Social Psychology
- 4.6 Some Ethical Issues in Social Psychological Research
 - 4.6.1 Deception
 - 4.6.2 Informed Consent
 - 4.6.3 Debriefing
 - 4.6.4 Minimal Risk
- 4.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.8 Unit End Questions
- 4.9 Glossary
- 4.10 Suggested Readings

4.0 INTRODUCTION

From its very beginning mainstream social psychology adopted a cognitive orientation. The central concept of the discipline was attitude, recognised early on in 1935 as indispensable for social psychology. While all social sciences use this concept, it is social psychology that clarified it, made it measurable and studied it in its own right. A second strand of concern developed under the powerful influence of Kurt Lewin: the study of small groups. Group dynamics investigated the influence of leadership styles on the productivity and cohesion of groups, identified communication patterns, compared individual judgments with group decisions and conformity. In this unit we will be dealing with the application of social psychology to different settings, and the ethical issues related to social psychology.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- 1 Describe the growing influence on application of social psychology to different areas;
- 1 Analyse the growing influence of Cognitive Perspective;
- 1 Explain Multicultural Perspective;
- 1 Define and describe the relationship between Sociobiology and evolutionary psychology;and
- 1 Elucidate the ethical issues in social psychological research.

4.2 SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY APPLICATIONS

Social psychology as it is today with broadening its field by the research work on touching various aspects of life, viz. population psychology, health psychology, environmental psychology, legal system and psychology. It can be used to understand personal health problems as well problems our earth is facing. Social psychology has adopted multicultural perspective to understand behaviour with respect to the cultural and social context.

Dissonance and attribution theory have created the most voluminous body of experimental work. During the late 1960, it was pointed out that the mainstream social psychology had emphasised predominantly individual cognitive processes and had neglected the social context and that it had relied too exclusively on experiments in laboratory settings.

Modern Social psychology has notable features such as that it has broadened its repertoire of methods. It has become much more relevant to the understanding of everyday life with research works focused on its application in various areas. The social phenomena are explained with respect to different social and cultural settings.

The cognitive approach to the explanations which was more or less sidelined by experimental and behavioural approach is again gaining significance. New trends such as socio biology and evolutionary social psychology have broadened the realm of theoretical tools of social psychology.

Practical demands have always far surpassed the theoretical knowledge in social psychology. The 1970 and 1980 were marked by growing concerns with the application of social knowledge. "Applied social psychology is the utilisation of social psychological principles and research methods in real world settings in an effort to solve a variety of individual and societal problems" (Weyant 1986). In this section we will discuss various applications of social psychology.

4.2.1 Population Psychology

Population psychology concentrates on the effects of the rapid expansion of the number of humans on this planet and on efforts to control this expansion. How is it that the number of human beings has grown in this fashion? Sagan (1989) explains the mathematical phenomenon in terms of the 'Secret of the Persian

Chessboard.” Legend has it that the grand vizier of Persia invented the game of chess played on a board divided into sixty-four squares. The king was pleased by this new game and he told the vizier to select whatever he wished as a reward. The clever inventor pretended to be a modest man who seemed to make only a small request. He asked the king to give him a few grains of wheat-just one grain on the first square of the board, doubling it to two grain on the second square, four grains on the third, and so on for all sixty four squares. The king thought that this was a small reward, and he was relieved that so little had been requested. What was not obvious to the king, or to most of us, is that by the time the doubling continued to the sixty fourth square, the reward would add up to 18.5 quintillion grains of wheat: about 75 billion metric tons- more than the contents of all the king’s granaries. This type of astonishing growth is called exponential increase.

In a similar way, when time passes arithmetically, population grows geometrically each year. The reason why exponential growth comes as a surprise is that we ordinarily think in arithmetic rather than geometric terms. Our thinking is not adapted to the percentage increments. Also, the passage of large segment of time is required for noticeable growth. Some observers argue that continued population growth is essential because it acts as an incentive, resulting in a rise in everyone’s standard of living. Since continued growth of population eats away the development, an attitudinal change is required.

Social psychology is important in changing attitude and enhancing sensitivity. “To bring about change, it is obviously important for psychologists to help increase the quality and quantity of sex education, to bring about changes and reduce situational constraints either to modify dispositional variables or to modify educational messages and contraceptive availability to take account of individual differences” (Baron and Byron, 1994: 546).

4.2.2 Health Psychology

Health psychology is the specialty that studies psychological processes affecting the development, prevention and treatment of physical illnesses. A major obstacle to the prevention of many physical disorders is the reluctance of people to believe that some aspect of their lifestyle requires changing; mainly because information about possible threats to health arouses fear and anxiety, the more relevant such messages are to oneself the less one believes them.

In a study Lieberman & Chaiken (1992) women were given bogus information about medical research that found a link between caffeine and a breast disorder. The threat was either high or low. Women for whom the threat was most relevant (regular coffee drinkers) were less likely to believe either the high threat or the low threat message than were women who did not drink coffee. The study showed that how personal relevance and self-interest interact in affecting people’s response to informational messages.

Psychologists have been studying the effects of stress since World War II. The questions of stress and illness, stress and coping and reduction of the harmful effects of stress have been investigated by psychologists. The most common source of stress are occupational threats, family threats, complaints from a spouse, pressure from a supervisor to work harder etc. One reason that physical illness is likely to occur during times of stress is that the resulting worry and anxiety may interfere with such health related behaviours as eating a balanced diet or exercising.

In addition to this indirect effect the body's immune system functions less well when stress is high. This finding of a direct link between psychological responses and the body's defense against disease has led to the development of the field of psychoneuro-immunology. This interdisciplinary approach studies stress, emotional and behavioural reactions, and the immune system simultaneously. Zimmerman (1990) suggests that the term 'learned helpfulness (as contrasted with learned helplessness) be applied to individuals who know how to solve problems and who feel a sense of control.

Several other personality variables have been studied which predict possibility to develop or not develop sickness, for example neurotic individuals react more negatively to stress than those who are not neurotic and are also more likely to become ill as a result.

Health is also affected by the kind of goals for which we strive.

People also differ in their characteristic feelings of pessimism and optimism. Those with a pessimistic outlook view events uncontrollable.

Type A behaviour pattern (competitiveness, anger, an urgency about time and a workaholic life style) as a personality variable is associated with aggression. Research indicates that people identified as Type A, compared to Type B, have higher blood pressure, produce smallest amounts of HDL-good cholesterol and are twice likely to suffer from heart disease.

It appears that the anger component is a critical factor that leads to coronary problems. Thus, working hard to achieve does not cause heart disease, but failure to achieve elicit a hostile self-schema for the Type A person. This hostility in turn is detrimental to good health.

A familiar concept in health psychology is the importance of social support-physical and psychological comfort from friends and family. The general finding is that people who interact closely with family and friends are better able to avoid illness than those who remain isolated from others, if illness does occur, those who receive social support recover more quickly. It is because there is someone with whom one can talk about unpleasant life events rather than engaging in self-concealment.

When an illness does strike, the person has to make a series of critical choices and decisions- noticing and interpreting symptoms, deciding to take action and coping with medical procedures. Thus, research in health psychology focuses on individual lifestyles and their perceptions and attitudes so that it can contribute for the better personal health just by enthusing right kind of thinking.

4.2.3 Environmental Psychology

Environmental psychology is the field that deals with interaction between physical world and human behaviour. Among the environmental factors affect behaviours are environmental stress, noise, temperature, air pollution, atmospheric electricity etc. The negative effects of human actions on environment include global warming and the ever-mounting problem of waste. Studies designed to control littering suggest that pro-environmental behaviour can be increased by the use of prompts, rewards and legalisations.

4.2.4 Industrial Organisational Psychology

It is an application of social psychology which focuses on understanding behaviours in work settings especially within the field of industries and organisations. Work related attitudes include employees' evaluation of jobs (job satisfaction) and of their organisations. Research has emphasised the determinants and the consequences of these attitudes.

Work motivation is influenced by cognitive factors, the outcomes of performance, and the perception of inequity.

A common problem in organisations is conflict, and psychologists have identified both organisational causes competition over scarce resources, and interpersonal causes such as stereotypes, prejudices, grudges and ineffective communication styles. Organisational conflicts can be reduced or resolved by such techniques as bargaining, super-ordinate goals and the induction of represses incompatible with anger and conflict.

4.2.5 Legal System and Social Psychology

Forensic psychology has produced ample evidence that the reality of our legal system often doesn't live up to its ideals. Witnesses and defendants are influenced by interrogation procedures and media publicity.

Eyewitness testimony is often inaccurate and the behaviours of attorneys and judges can influence verdict. Jurors respond in part on the basis of cognitive reinterpretation of the evidence and on emotional biases for and against specific defendants.

Psychologists working in this area contribute to the social order by their research human cognitive system and communication patterns.

Human cognitive system has limits and it is affected by various things. Legal procedures depend mostly on reports and evidences by eyewitness. But the fact about human memory can be revealing: its limited capacity, constructive processes all need to be paid attention to in court hearings.

Ever increasing demands of psychology in various field call for specialist help to work in these areas. As we earlier said practical demands far surpass theoretical work in social psychology. But in any ways, it is exporting its knowledge and importing various ideas from other sciences and practices.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Discuss the application of social psychology to different areas.

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2) How is social psychology applied to Population psychology?

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3) Discuss the application of social psychology to health fields.

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4) How will you apply social psychology to environmental and industrial / organisational fields?

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5) How is social psychology concerned with legal system?

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4.3 GROWING INFLUENCE OF COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE

Cognitive factors— attitudes, beliefs, values, inferences, play a key role in social behaviour. Social psychologists have realised that our understanding of virtually all aspects of social behaviours could be greatly enhanced by attention to the cognitive processes that underlie them.

This approach involves efforts to many aspects of social thought and social behaviours, basic knowledge about such issue as (1) how memory operates, (2) What are human reasoning processes, and (3) how new information is integrated into existing mental formworks. Efforts have been made to understand the nature and impact of stereotypes in relation to certain aspects of memory (tendencies to recall only certain types of information) and aspects of social reasoning that can lead people to false conclusions about others. The results of research conducted within this perspective have been show that affect is an important determinant of many forms of social behaviors ranging from helping on the one hand, through aggression and conflict on the other. Researchers have also studied the relation between affect and cognition— how feelings shape thought and how thought shapes feelings.

4.4 MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Social psychology have always been accused of being American. It was pointed out that the predominance of experimental orientation in social psychology is deficient not due to the fact that experimentation is useless as a method but because of the fact that the possibility is lost on the level of experimental research to see the connection between the problem studied and the social context. Multicultural diversity was the need of the hour for social psychology to really be social. The questions were: can the findings of the studies (usually conducted in the U.S.) be generalised to other cultures? Are the principles of behaviours established in the U.S. universally applicable?

Many social psychologists now believe that cultural factors and forces are so powerful that they can influence even the most basic aspects of social behaviours. It is increasingly becoming clear that cultural difference are an important topic in their own right and should receive careful attention in social psychological research.

Why do persons from different cultures react in contrasting ways to various situations? The study of such issues may help clarify those aspects which are universal and those that are culturally determined.

4.5 SOCIOBIOLOGY AND EVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Is social behaviour influenced by biological processes and by genetic factors? Many social psychologists today believe that our preferences, behaviours, emotional reactions and cognitive abilities are affected to some extent by our biological inheritance (Buss 1990, Nisbett 1990). Sociobiology a discipline that is based on the thought that many aspects of social behaviours are the result of evolutionary processes in which patterns of behaviours that contribute to reproduction are strengthened and spread throughout a population. Evolutionary social psychology suggests that social tendencies toward behaviours that are most adaptive from the point of view of survivals increase in strength over time within a given population. But it is also recognised that such tendencies change in response to environmental and social conditions. They can even be altered by cognitive processes. But some of the basic assumptions of sociobiology are questioned. Behaviours can be changed. Tendencies in social behaviours should exist because they are the result of a long evolutionary processor is also rejected.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Discuss the growing influence of cognitive perspective in social psychology.

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- 2) Explain social psychology from a multicultural perspective.

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- 3) Explain the various aspects of social psychology from a biological perspective.

- 4) Explain the evolutionary perspective in social psychology.

4.6 SOME ETHICAL ISSUES IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Until the mid 20th century few people worried about the ethics of research with human participants. After World War II, however, the discovery of Nazi atrocities such as the dangerous and often fatal medical experiments carried out by doctors in concentration camps on unwilling prisoners come to light.

Concerns were also raised by the discovery of unethical medical experimentation in the United States such as the notorious Tuskegee case. In 1932 the U.S. public Health service began a 40- year study in Tuskegee Alabama on 399 poor and semiliterate African American men who had syphilis, a progressive disease that can lead to brain damage and death. The goal was to trace the effects of syphilis on untreated males over many years. The men were told that they were being treated but in fact they were never given medication even though penicillin was available and was effective against the disease. Even as late as sixties, treatment was still being withheld from the survivors while the study continued.

4.6.1 Deception

In the field of social psychology, ethical concerns have been focused on the use of deception by researchers. It might sound inherently contradictory for a discipline that calls itself science and yet use deception as a major research tool. Why is deception so prevalent? Most researchers agree that in many cases it is necessary to disguise key elements of a study in order to avoid having subject's behaviour influenced by what they think to be a true purpose of the study. Deception may appear in following forms: (Geller 1981)

Implicit deception occurs when the actual situation is so different from what the subjects expect that they behave under incorrect assumptions. In the most extreme cases subject do not even know that they are in an experiment when in reality they are.

Technical deception occurs when the equipment and procedures of an experiment are misrepresented. This occurs when subjects are given a cover story about the purpose of the experiment but the real purpose is in fact very different.

Role deception occurs when other people in a study are misrepresented. Another subject may actually be a confederate of the experiment or the experimenter may pose as a fellow student in a classroom.

Deception raises a number of ethical dilemmas. Should people be studied without their knowledge? Should the true purpose of experiments be revealed to subjects? Should research procedures place people under stress? Should researchers induce subjects to behave in way that they otherwise would be unlikely to do? These questions have led to efforts within many professional associations to define ethical behaviours in researches. The American Psychological Association (APA) first developed guidelines for the ethical conduct of psychological research in 1972 and revised these guidelines in 1992. Three important issues in psychological research are: informed consent, debriefing and minimal risk.

4.6.2 Informed Consent

A subject must voluntarily agree to participate in research without any coercion and must understand what the participation involves. This is known as informed consent. The researcher has an obligation to tell the potential subject as much as possible about the study before asking them to participate. Subjects should be informed about the research procedures, any risks or benefits of the research, their right to refuse to participate and their right to withdraw at any time during the research without penalty. Any exception to this general guideline must be approved by the institutional review board after careful examination of the planned research. But these requirements may create problems for a social psychologist. It may be important in some cases to not reveal the true purpose of the research to avoid bias into their responses. Even in simple research subjects are rarely told the specific hypotheses that are being tested. What would happen if a researcher first told subjects that the study is focused on the willingness to help strangers in distress and then tested to see if the subject would help in an emergency? However, participants need not be told everything that will happen but they should know that they are in a study.

4.6.3 Debriefing

At the end of their participation in a study, a subject should always be debriefed. Debriefing means explaining in some detail the purpose and the procedure of the research. Participants should be given an opportunity to ask questions and express their feelings. A friendly discussion between the researcher and the participant can help a subject to recover from any upset the research may have caused and to learn from their research experience. When research deals with very sensitive topics, it may be important for the researcher to suggest ways in which participants can learn more about the topic. Sometimes researchers offer to send participants written information about the result of the study once the research findings have been analysed.

4.6.4 Minimal Risk

A third guideline for research is to minimise potential risks to the subjects. Minimal

risk means that the possible risks of participating in the research are no greater than ordinarily encountered in daily life. What kinds of risks can social psychological research pose? One of the most important risks is the invasion of privacy. An individual's right to privacy must be respected and valued.

The other main category of risk in social Psychology comes from stress of various kinds. Subjects must be allowed to make decisions based on adequate information. Finally the subjects should leave the study in essentially the same state of mind and body in which they entered. Social psychological research offers the joy of new discoveries about human experience. The thoughtful use of scientific methods can do much to advance our understanding of social life and social problems.

But psychological research also carries with it the responsibility to treat research participants with sensitivity and high ethical standards and to repay their valuable assistance by sharing results of the research.

Self Assessment Questions

1) What are the ethical issues in social psychology research?

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2) What are the different types of deception n one comes across in social psychology research?

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3) What is informed consent? Why is it necessary?

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4) Explain debriefing.

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4.7 LET US SUM UP

Current social psychology is characterised by the research and applications in various subjects of everyday life. From personal health, environment to law, everything comes within its ken. Its importance is added by the fact that all the parts and problems of human life are based on human thinking and attitudes. Understanding them better will lead to a better socially managed life. Whether the behaviour is concerned with individuals, small groups or our planet, knowing the basic nature of human will give our techniques a far better ground for utilisation. Multicultural perspective, cognitive approach to the problems, sociobiology and evolutionary psychology are some of the recent trend in social psychology.

Research ethics made it mandatory to respect the individuality and privacy of the research participants. There should be no physical and mental harm to those taking part in research. All the social psychological researches should follow APA guidelines.

4.8 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you mean by applied social psychology?
- 2) What are the various fields in which social psychology can be applied?
- 3) Discuss critically the growing influence of cognitive perspective in social psychology.
- 4) Discuss the biological and evolutionary perspective in social psychology?
- 5) Write a note on ethical issues in social psychology.

4.9 GLOSSARY

Applied social psychology: utilisation of social psychological principles and research methods in real word settings in an effort to solve a variety of individual and societal problems.

Population psychology : concentrates on the effects of the rapid expansion of the number of humans on this planet and on efforts to control this expansion.

Health psychology : the spatiality that studies psychological processes affecting the development, prevention and treatment of physical illness.

Environmental psychology : is the field that deals with interaction between physical world and human behaviour.

Industrial and organisational psychology : application of social psychology which focuses on understanding behaviours in work settings especially within the field of industries and organisations.

- Sociobiology** : the theory that many aspects of social behaviors are the result of evolutionary processes in which patterns of behaviours that contribute to reproduction are strengthened and spread throughout a population.
- Evolutionary social psychology** : social tendencies toward behaviours that are most adaptive from the point of view of survival increase in strength over time within a given population.
- Deception** : to disguise key elements of a study in order to avoid having subject's behavior influenced by what they think to be a true purpose of the study.
- Informed consent** : A subject must voluntarily agree to participate in research without any coercion and must understand what the participation involves.
- Debriefing** : explaining in some detail the purpose and the procedure of the research at the end of study to the participants.
- Minimal Risk** : A third guideline for research is to minimise potential risks to the subjects. Minimal risk means that the possible risks of participating in the research are no greater than ordinarily encountered in daily life.

4.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

Andreyeva, Galina (1990) *Social Psychology*. Progress Publication: Moscow

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UNIT 1 THE CONCEPT OF SOCIAL INFLUENCE

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Current Research on Social Influence
 - 1.2.1 Minority Influence
 - 1.2.2 Persuasion
 - 1.2.3 Elaboration Likelihood Model
 - 1.2.4 Heuristic-systemic Models
 - 1.2.5 Social Impact Theory
 - 1.2.6 Social Influence Network Theory
 - 1.2.7 Expectation States Theory
- 1.3 Areas of Social Influence
 - 1.3.1 Conformity
 - 1.3.1.1 Asch's (1951) Experiment on Conformity
 - 1.3.1.2 Factors Found to Increasing Conformity
 - 1.3.1.3 Informational Social Influence
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 - 1.3.2.2.1 Foot-in-the-door Technique
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 - 1.3.3 Obedience
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 - 1.3.3.3 Obedience Training of Human Beings
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 - 1.3.3.4.1 The Stanford Prison Experiment
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 - 1.3.3.4.3 Factors That Increase Obedience
- 1.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.5 Unit End Questions
- 1.6 Suggested Reading and References

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Social influence is defined as change in an individual's thoughts, feelings, attitudes, or behaviours that results from interaction with another individual or group. It refers to the change in behaviour that one person causes in another, intentionally or unintentionally. As a result, the changed person perceives himself in relationship

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to the influencer, other people and society in general. In this unit we will be dealing with Current research on social influence, such as minority influence etc., areas of social influence such as conformity with related experiments, compliance and its factors, obedience and the related factors and experimental studies on human obedience.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- 1 Define Social influence;
- 1 Differentiate between various types of Social influence;
- 1 Analyse various factors associated with Conformity;
- 1 Explain various factors affecting Compliance; and
- 1 Describe the factors affecting Obedience.

1.2 CURRENT RESEARCH ON SOCIAL INFLUENCE

Social influence can also be defined as the process by which individuals make real changes to their feelings and behaviours as a result of interaction with others who are perceived to be similar, desirable, or expert. People adjust their beliefs with respect to others to whom they feel similar in accordance with psychological principles such as balance. Individuals are also influenced by the majority: when a large portion of an individual's referent social group holds a particular attitude, it is likely that the individual will adopt it as well. Additionally, individuals may change an opinion under the influence of another who is perceived to be an expert in the matter at hand. French and Raven (1959) provided an early formalisation of the concept of social influence in their discussion of the bases of social power. For French and Raven, agents of change included not just individuals and groups, but also norms and roles. They viewed social influence as the outcome of the exertion of social power from one of five bases: reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, expert power, or referent power. A change in opinion or attitude was considered an instance of social influence.

Since 1959, scholars have distinguished true social influence from forced public acceptance and from changes based on reward or coercive power. Social researchers are still concerned with public compliance, reward power, and coercive power, but those concerns are differentiated from social influence studies.

Current research on social influence generally uses experimental methodology and tends to fall into five main areas: (1) minority influence in group settings, (2) research on persuasion, (3) dynamic social impact theory, (4) a structural approach to social influence, and (5) social influence in expectation states theory. Each is discussed below.

1.2.1 Minority Influence

Minority influence is said to occur when a minority subgroup attempts to change the majority. For example, teachers often influence their students' beliefs, and political and religious leaders frequently influence the behaviour of their followers.

While some previous research has characterised the process of social influence as the majority riding over the minority, many scholars interested in minority influence believe that every member of a group can influence others, at least to some degree. Studies have found this to be particularly true when the minority group is consistent in what it presents to the majority. In addition, the presence of minority groups within a larger group often leads to more creative thinking and better overall solutions on group tasks. Nemeth and Kwan (1987) demonstrated this in a study of four-person groups working on a creativity task. Individuals were given information that a majority 3 of 3 or a minority 1 of 3 of the other group members had come up with a novel response to the task at hand. Those who were in the minority condition actually produced more correct solutions to the task, indicating the strong effect of minority viewpoints.

1.2.2 Persuasion

Current research on persuasion, broadly defined as change in attitudes or beliefs based on information received from others, focuses on written or spoken messages sent from source to recipient. This research operates on the assumption that individuals process messages carefully whenever they are motivated and able to do so. Two types of theories dominate modern persuasion research: the elaboration likelihood model and heuristic-systemic models.

1.2.3 Elaboration Likelihood Model

The elaboration likelihood model developed by Cacioppo, Petty, and Stoltenberg (1985) has been used most frequently in therapeutic and counseling settings. It states that the amount and nature of thinking that a person does about a message will affect the kind of persuasion that the message produces. Aspects of the persuasion situation that have been shown to be important for this model include source, message, recipient, affect, channel, and context. Of particular importance is the degree to which the recipient views the message's issue as relevant to himself. This model has demonstrated its utility in persuading various people to make various types of healthier choices e.g., cancer patients, teens at risk from tobacco use.

1.2.4 Heuristic-systemic Models

Heuristic-systemic models propose that argument strength will be most effective in persuading an individual when he is motivated and able to attend to the message, the "systemic" route. When the target individual is not motivated or is unable to attend carefully, persuasion will take place through more indirect means, the "heuristic" route, such as nonverbal cues or source credibility. Persuasion that takes place via the systemic route will be relatively permanent and enduring; persuasion through the heuristic route is more likely to be temporary.

1.2.5 Social Impact Theory

Broader than persuasion, social impact theory, as developed primarily by Bibb Latane (1981), forms the basis for an active line of inquiry today called dynamic social impact theory. Social impact means any of the number of changes that might occur in an individual (physiological, cognitive, emotional, or behavioural) due to the presence or action of others, who are real, imagined, or implied.

Process of Social Influence

Social impact theory proposes that the impact of any information source is a function of three factors: (i) the number of others who make up that source, (ii) their immediacy i.e., closeness, and their strength and (iii) salience or power.

Dynamic social impact theory uses ideas about social impact to describe and predict the diffusion of beliefs through social systems. In this view, social structure is the result of individuals influencing each other in a dynamic way. The likelihood of being influenced by someone nearby, rather than far away, (the immediacy factor) produces localised cultures of beliefs within communication networks.

This process can lead initially randomly distributed attitudes and beliefs to become clustered or correlated, less popular beliefs become consolidated into minority subcultures. Dynamic social impact theory views society as a self-organising complex system in which individuals interact and impact each others' beliefs.

Like dynamic social impact theory, the structural approach to social influence examines interpersonal influence that occurs within a larger network of influences. In this larger network, attitudes and opinions of individuals are reflections of the attitudes and opinions of their referent others.

Interpersonal influence is seen as a basis of individuals' socialisation and identity. Social influence is seen as the process by which a group of actors will weigh and then integrate the opinions of significant others within the context of social structural constraints. The structure determines the initial positions of group members and the network and weight of interpersonal influences within the group.

1.2.6 Social Influence Network Theory

Social influence network theory, as described by Friedkin (1998), has its roots in work by social psychologists and mathematicians. The formal theory involves a two-weighted averaging of influential opinions. Actors start out with their own initial opinions on some matter. At each stage, then, actors form a "norm" opinion which is a weighted average of the other opinions in the group. Actors then modify their own opinion in response to this norm, forming a new opinion which is a weighted average of their initial opinion and the network norm. This theory utilises mathematical models and quantifications to measure the process of social influence.

1.2.7 Expectation States Theory

Expectation states theory provides another formal treatment of social influence. Rooted in the work of Bales (1950), which found inequalities in the amount of influence group members had over one another. Researchers in this tradition have developed systematic models predicting the relative influence of task-oriented actors in group settings. Bales discovered that even when group members were equal on status at the beginning of the group session, some members would end up being more influential than others.

The group would develop a hierarchy based on the behaviour of the group members. When group members were initially unequal in status, inequalities would be imported to the group from the larger society such that, for example, age or sex or race would structure a hierarchy of influence.

Expectation states theory, as described in Berger et al. (1980), was originally

proposed as an explanation for Bales's finding that groups of status equals would develop inequalities in influence. According to the theory, group members develop expectations about the future task performance of all group members, including themselves. Once developed, these expectations guide the group interaction. In fact, expectations both guide and are maintained by the interaction. Those group members for whom the highest expectations are held will be the most influential in the group's interactions.. Scholars are continuing to expand the theory both theoretically and substantively.

1.3 AREAS OF SOCIAL INFLUENCE

Three areas of social influence are conformity, compliance and obedience. *Conformity* is changing how you behave to be more like others. This plays to belonging and esteem needs as we seek the approval and friendship of others. Conformity can run very deep, as we will even change our beliefs and values to be like those of our peers and admired superiors.

Compliance is where a person does something that they are asked to do by another. They may choose to comply or not to comply, although the thoughts of social reward and punishment may lead them to compliance when they really do not want to comply. *Obedience* is different from compliance in that it is obeying an order from someone that you accept as an authority figure. In compliance, you have some choice. In obedience, you believe that you do not have a choice. Many military officers and commercial managers are interested only in obedience.

1.3.1 Conformity

Conformity is the process by which an individual's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours are conditioned by what is conceived to be what other people might perceive. This influence occurs in both small groups and society as a whole, and it may be the result of subtle unconscious influences, or direct and overt social pressure. Conformity also occurs by the "implied presence" of others, or when other people are not actually present. For example, people tend to follow the norms of society when eating or watching television, even when they are at home by themselves. People often conform from a desire to achieve a sense of security within a group—typically a group that is of a similar age, culture, religion, or educational status.

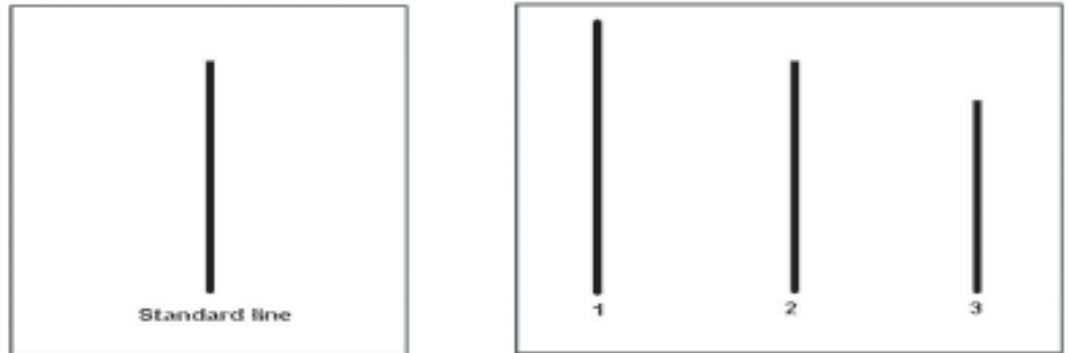
Any unwillingness to conform carries with it the very real risk of social rejection. In this respect, conformity can be seen as a safe means of avoiding bullying or deflecting criticism from peers. Conformity is often associated with adolescence and youth culture, but it affects humans of all ages. Although peer pressure may be viewed as a negative trait, conformity can have either good or bad effects depending on the situation. Driving safely on the correct side of the road is a beneficial example of conformity. Conformity influences the formation and maintenance of social norms and allows society to function smoothly and predictably. Because conformity is a group phenomenon, such factors as group size, unanimity, cohesion, status, prior commitment, and public opinion all help to determine the level of conformity an individual will display (Aronson, et.al. (2007).

1.3.1.1 Asch's (1951) Experiment on Conformity

Perhaps the most influential study of conformity came from Solomon E. Asch

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(1951). Asch gave groups of seven or nine college students what appeared to be a test of perceptual judgment: matching the length of a line segment to comparison lines. Each subject saw a pair of cards set up in front of the room, similar to the ones that follow.



Stimuli like those used by Asch

Subjects received the following instructions:

This is a task involving the discrimination of lengths of lines. Before you is a pair of cards. On the left is a card with one line. The card at the right has three lines different in length; they are numbered 1, 2 and 3, in order. One of the three lines at the right is equal to the standard line at the left—you will decide in each case which is the equal line. You will state your judgment in terms of the number of the line. There will be 18 such comparisons in all... As the number of comparisons is few and the group small, I will call upon each of you in turn to announce your judgments.

In a group of nine, eight subjects were actually confederates of the experimenter. The experiment was designed so that the genuine subject was called upon next-to-last in the group. The experimenter's confederates had been instructed, in advance, to make deliberately ridiculous judgments on many of the trials, but to agree unanimously with one another. On 12 of the 18 trials, they said in loud voices (for example) that the 4½" line was exactly equal to 3" standard line. The pressure of the group had a dramatic effect. Although people could pick the correct line 99% of the time when making the judgments by themselves, they went along with the erroneous group judgment 75% of the time, even when it was plainly wrong.

The conforming subjects did not fool themselves into thinking the wrong line was equal to the standard line. They could see the difference. However, they were influenced by eight people in a row making the "wrong" decision. Asked later why they had made such obviously incorrect judgments, subjects reported, "They must have been looking at line widths" or "I assumed it was an optical illusion" or "If eight out of nine people made the same choice, I must have missed something in the instructions."

Asch obtained the conformity effect even when the confederate declared an eleven-inch line to be equivalent to a four-inch standard. He found that small groups—even groups of three, containing two confederates and one naïve subject—were sufficient to induce the effect.

About a quarter of the subjects remained independent throughout the testing and never changed their judgments to fit those of the group. One could argue that Asch's experiment showed stubborn independence in some people, just as it showed conformity in others. A subject who did *not* conform reported to Asch later:

I've never had any feeling that there was any virtue in being like others. I'm used to being different. I often come out well by being different. I don't like easy group opinions.

Asch later tested the effect of having a *dissenter* in the group. He found that if only one of seven confederates disagreed with the group decision, this was enough to free most subjects from the conformity effect. However, if the dissenter defected later, joining the majority after the first five trials, rates of conformity increased again. The public nature of the judgment also seemed to have an effect. If subjects were invited to write their responses in private, while the majority made oral responses, this destroyed the conformity effect.

1.3.1.2 Factors Found to Increase Conformity

Asch's experiment inspired a lot of follow-up research by other experimenters. Factors found to increase conformity included the following:

- 1) Attractiveness of other members in the group . People tended to go along with a group of attractive people.
- 2) Complexity or difficulty of the task . People were more likely to conform if the judgment was difficult.
- 3) Group cohesiveness. People conformed more if friendships or mutual dependencies were set up beforehand .

To appreciate further the nature of this dilemma, let us imagine an introductory lecture in psychology. The instructor is describing the Asch study and has just shown a picture of the experimental stimuli. Suddenly he is interrupted by a student who remarks, "But line A is the correct answer..." Predictably, the class would laugh aloud and thereby communicate their enjoyment of their peer's joke. Suppose, however, that the dissenter failed to smile or to otherwise confirm that he was trying to be funny. Suppose, instead, that he insisted, "Why are you all laughing at me? I can see perfectly, and line A is correct." Once convinced of the dissenter's sincerity, the class response almost certainly would be a mixture of discomfort, bewilderment, concern, and doubt about the dissenter's mental and perceptual competence. It is *this* response that the Asch dissenters risked and, accordingly, it is not surprising that many chose to avoid it through conformity.

Was the Asch conformity effect possibly due to the era in which it was carried out? After all, the early 1950s were famous for emphasising conformity, such as the "corporate man" who did everything possible to eliminate his individuality and fit into a business setting. To see if the same experiment would work with a later generation of subjects, NBC news had social psychologist Anthony Pratkanis replicate the Asch experiment in front of a hidden camera for its *Dateline* show in 1997. Sure enough, the experiment still worked, and the percentage of conformists was almost identical to what Asch found. Most students, even some who looked creative or rebellious on the outside, went along with obviously

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incorrect group judgments. Later they explained that they did not want to look foolish, so they just “caved in.”

Research in has focused primarily on two main varieties of conformity. These are *informational* conformity, or informational social influence, and *normative* conformity, otherwise known as normative social influence.

1.3.1.3 Informational Social Influence

Informational social influence occurs when one turns to the members of one's group to obtain accurate information. A person is most likely to use informational social influence in three situations: When a situation is ambiguous, people become uncertain about what to do. They are more likely to depend on others for the answer. During a crisis when immediate action is necessary, in spite of panic. Looking to other people can help ease fears, but unfortunately they are not always right. The more knowledgeable a person is, the more valuable they are as a resource. Thus people often turn to experts for help. But once again people must be careful, as experts can make mistakes too. Informational social influence often results in *internalisation* or *private acceptance*, where a person genuinely believes that the information is right. Informational social influence was first documented in Muzafer Sherif's autokinetic experiment (Sherif, M., 1936). He was interested in how many people change their opinions to bring them in line with the opinion of a group. Participants were placed in a dark room and asked to stare at a small dot of light 15 feet away. They were then asked to estimate the amount it moved. The trick was there was no movement, it was caused by a visual illusion known as the autokinetic effect. Every person perceived different amounts of movement. Over time, the same estimate was agreed on and others conformed to it. Sherif suggested that this was a simulation for how social norms develop in a society, providing a common frame of reference for people.

Subsequent experiments were based on more realistic situations. In an eyewitness identification task, participants were shown a suspect individually and then in a lineup of other suspects. They were given one second to identify him, making it a difficult task.

One group was told that their input was very important and would be used by the legal community. To the other it was simply a trial. Being more motivated to get the right answer increased the tendency to conform.

Those who wanted to be most accurate conformed 51% of the time as opposed to 35% in the other group (Baron, 1996). Economists have suggested that fads and trends in society form as the result of individuals making rational choices based on information received from others. These information form quickly as people decide to ignore their internal signals and go along with what other people are doing.

1.3.1.4 Normative social influence

Normative social influence occurs when one conforms to be liked or accepted by the members of the group. It usually results in *public compliance*, doing or saying something without believing in it. Asch was the first psychologist to study this phenomenon in the laboratory. As mentioned earlier, He conducted a modification of Sherif's study, assuming that when the situation was very clear, conformity would be drastically reduced. He exposed people in a group to a series of lines, and the participants were asked to match one line with a standard line.

All participants except one were secretly told to give the wrong answer in 12 of the 18 trials. The results showed a surprisingly high degree of conformity. 76% of the participants conformed on at least one trial. On average people conformed one third of the time.

However, in a reinterpretation of the original data from these experiments Hodges and Geyer (2006) found that Asch's subjects were not so conformist after all. The experiments provide powerful evidence for people's tendency to tell the truth even when others do not. Also, there are multiple moral claims which include the need for participants to care for the integrity and well-being of other participants, the experimenter, themselves, and the worth of scientific research.

Normative influence is a function of social impact theory which has three components. The *number of people* in the group has a surprising effect. As the number increases, each person has less of an impact. A group's *strength* is how important the group is to a person. Groups we value generally have more social influence. *Immediacy* is how close the group is in time and space when the influence is taking place. Psychologists have constructed a mathematical model using these three factors and are able to predict the amount of conformity that occurs with some degree of accuracy.

Baron and his colleagues conducted a second "eyewitness study", this time focusing on normative influence (Baron, 1996). In this version, the task was made easier. Each participant was given five seconds to look at a slide, instead of just one second. Once again there were both high and low motives to be accurate, but the results were the reverse of the first study. The low motivation group conformed 33% of the time (similar to Asch's findings). The high motivation group conformed less at 16%.

These results show that when accuracy is not very important, it is better to get the wrong answer than to risk social disapproval.

An experiment using procedures similar to Asch's found that there was significantly less conformity in six-person groups of friends as compared to six-person groups of strangers. Because friends already know and accept each other, there may be less normative pressure to conform in some situations. Field studies on cigarette and alcohol abuse, however, generally demonstrate evidence of friends exerting normative social influence on each other.

1.3.1.5 Minority Influence and Conformity

Although conformity generally leads individuals to think and act more like groups, individuals are occasionally able to reverse this tendency and change the people around them. This is known as *minority influence*, a special case of informational influence.

Minority influence is most likely when people are able to make a clear and consistent case for their point of view. If the minority fluctuates and shows uncertainty, the chance of influence is small. However, if the minority makes a strong, convincing case, it will increase the probability of changing the beliefs and behaviour of the majority.

Minority members who are perceived as experts, are high in status, or have benefited the group in the past are also more likely to succeed. Another form of

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minority influence can sometimes override conformity effects and lead to unhealthy group dynamics. By creating negative emotional climate that interferes with healthy group functioning. They can be avoided by careful selection procedures and managed by reassigning them to positions that require less social interaction.

1.3.1.6 Gender and Conformity

Societal norms often establish gender differences. In general, this is the case for social conformity, as females are more likely to conform than males (Reitan & Shaw, 1964).

There are differences in the way men and women conform to social influence. Social psychologists, Alice Eagly and Linda Carli performed a meta-analysis of 148 studies of influenceability. They found that women are more persuasible and more conforming than men in group pressure situations that involve surveillance. In situations not involving surveillance, women are less likely to conform.

In a study by Sistrunk and McDavid at a private university, a public junior college, and at a high school, overall, females were more susceptible to social pressures than males. In fact, females conformed more than males 3 out of 4 times when they were presented masculine questions. Males conformed more than females 2 out of 4 times when they were presented feminine questions.

The composition of the group plays a role in conformity as well. In a study by Reitan and Shaw, it was found that men and women conformed more when there were participants of both sexes involved versus participants of the same sex. Subjects in the groups with both sexes were more apprehensive when there was a discrepancy amongst group members, and thus the subjects reported that they doubted their own judgments. (Reitan & Shaw, 1964).

Normative social influence explains women's attempt to create the ideal body through dieting, and also by eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia. Men, in contrast, are likely to pursue their ideal body image through dieting, steroids, and overworking their bodies, rather than developing eating disorders. Both men and women probably learn what kind of body is considered attractive by their culture through the process of informational social influence.

Self Assessment Questions

1) What are the current research in social influence?

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2) What kind of studies have been conducted to understand minority influence?

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3) Give with suitable examples some of the studies conducted in persuasion.

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4) Discuss elaboration likelihood and heuristic systemic models in regard to social influence.

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5) What do you understand by social impact theory and how it has contributed to understanding social influence?

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6) Discuss social influence network theory and the expectation states theory of social influence.

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7) Discuss the various areas of social influence .

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8) Put forward the experiment by Asch on conformity and indicate its significance for social influence.

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1.3.2 Compliance

In psychology, compliance refers to the act of responding favourably to an explicit or implicit request offered by others. The request may be explicit, such as a direct request for donations, or implicit, such as an advertisement promoting its products without directly asking for purchase. In all cases, the target recognises that he or she is being urged to respond in a desired way. To study the compliance professions from the inside, Cialdini (2001) joined training programs of a different compliance professions (sales, advertising, public relations, etc.) and started the participant observation. He found that some principles are commonly used to increase the probability of successful compliance, including reciprocation, credibility, liking/friendship, scarcity and social validation.

1.3.2.1 Principles Observed by Robert Cialdini

The principles observed by Cialdini include (i) reciprocation, (ii) credibility (iii) Liking / friendship (iv) Scarcity (v) Social validation and (vi) Commitment.

1.3.2.1.1 Reciprocation

Based on the social norm “treat others as you would expect to be treated”, when someone does us a favour, it creates an obligation to accept any reasonable requests he or she might make in return. We feel a motivation to reciprocate. For instance if someone does something for you (such as giving you a compliment), then you feel more obligated to do something for them (buy a product they may be offering). Failing to respond leads to violation of our obligation to reciprocate and bears the risk of social sanction. Guilt arousal produces an increase in compliance. People who are induced to guilt are more likely to comply with a request such as making a phone call to save native trees or donating blood (Darlington, & Macker, 1966).

Research findings supports in that this can be demonstrated by experiment. Participants acted as subjects to answer questions under two conditions. When they answered wrongly, participants acted as shock administrator and delivered shock in condition A . When participants acted as witness, witnessing subjects being shocked in condition B. After a few trials, requests for making calls were made. Results showed that participants in condition A were more likely to comply with the requests by making many more calls (39 calls) than those in condition B (6.5 calls). It is because participants in condition A comply with the requests in order to ward off their guilty feeling.

1.3.2.1.2 Credibility

The source of requests will also affect whether we comply or not. If the source is an expert, with knowledge, abilities or skills, i.e. more credible, we would respect the request more and would be more likely to comply. This principle is used as a marketing strategy, where they put on white lab coats which, from a consumer’s point of view, will symbolise authority.

One of the experiments conducted in this regard invited five hundred university students to join the study about their opinion of sleep. In the first stage, students gave their opinion on the optimum length of sleep and the average result was about eight hours. Then, students received advice from two sources, one was a physiologist who had won a Nobel Prize before and was a specialist on sleep research; the other one was a YMCA instructor.

Clearly, the former one represented a more credible source while the latter one represented a less credible source. Two experts varied their answer about the number of sleeping hours needed every day from eight to zero. Therefore, the discrepancy between the student's answer and the expert's answer increased from zero to eight.

After consulting the experts, students were asked to give their opinion again about the number of sleeping hours. When the experts' opinion was different from that of students, students were more likely to change their own answers after they got the advice from the physiologist (more credible source) than from the YMCA instructor (less credible source). Therefore, a high credibility source makes people more likely to comply. This may explain why advertisements nowadays always quote experts' opinion or construct a sense of expertise by showing a professional figure.

1.3.2.1.3 Liking/Friendship

People are more likely to say yes to those they know and like because of the Social Exchange Theory, which states that human relationships are formed by using a subjective cost-benefit analysis and the comparison of alternatives. Thus, complying with a person we like certainly is more favourable. This principle is used by salesmen all over the world. The principle of liking is common within neighbourhoods, neighbours selling and buying things from each other. When you feel that you trust a person you feel more obliged to buy the thing that they're selling.

In an experiment conducted by Dennis (2006), 115 female and 94 male undergraduate students were requested to complete a questionnaire asking them the degree of intimacy with their partners. Besides, participants were also asked to consider 32 behavioural change messages e.g. smoking cessation, safe sex practice, etc. as if these were delivered to them by their partners and to estimate their effectiveness on a 5-point scale.

The result showed that higher levels of intimacy within romantic relationships are significantly and positively correlated with the estimated success of appeals targeted at health-related behavioural motivations.

1.3.2.1.4 Scarcity

The scarcity effect refers to the influence of perceived scarcity on the subjective desirability of an object. Individuals do not want to be left alone without an item. A consumer often infers value in a product that has limited availability or is promoted as being scarce. The idea of "Limited edition" which can be seen all over the world is based on the principle of scarcity. When we see that an object is limited we feel the urge to buy them in order to not be left out. This also relates to the key explanation to one of the fundamental concepts in economics "Supply and Demand".

A classical experiment was done by Worchel et al. (1975). Jars of chocolate chip cookies were shown to the subjects who were then asked to rate 'how much do you like the cookies', 'how attractive the cookies are' and 'how much would you pay for the cookies'.

Results found that the rating of liking, attractiveness and cost paid were significantly

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higher in the scarcity condition in which there were only 2 cookies in the jar than in the abundant condition with 10 cookies in the jar. Therefore, suggesting that the product is scarce or in limited supply is an effective selling method. People are more likely to comply with the salesmen's persuasion and buy the limited edition products as they value more on scarce products.

1.3.2.1.5 Social Validation

Social Validation, also called "Principle of Conformity and Consensus", in compliance is a phenomenon in which people are more willing to take a recommended step if they see evidence that many others, especially similar others, are taking it. The human need to fit in is very strong and tends to make us comply in order to be a part of the majority.

Schultz (1999) had conducted a "Field Experiment on Curbside Recycling" to observe participants' curbside recycling behaviours for 17 weeks with different interventions. In the experiment, 5 conditions namely, 'plea', 'plea plus information', 'plea plus neighbourhood feedback', 'plea plus individual household feedback', or the control condition are observed.

Among these conditions, the 'Plea plus neighborhood feedback' condition in which subjects receive the total amount of each material collected for the duration of the study and the percentage of households participated that week, shows the most long lasting participation during post-intervention. This unveils the underlying strong influence of social validation in compliance.

On business front, manufacturers often persuade purchase by claiming that their products are the fastest growing or best selling in the market. Cialdini (2001) has pointed out that this strategy of enhancing compliance by providing information of others who had already complied was the most widely used principle he encountered.

1.3.2.1.6 Commitment

Commitment to a store or a company induced by loyalty cards or bonuses can make it harder for a person to change where they shop or what they purchase.

1.3.2.2 Four Compliance Strategies

Compliance is known to be enhanced by a number of situational manipulations such as:

- 1 Foot-in-the-door technique
- 1 Door-in-the-face technique
- 1 Low-Ball
- 1 Ingratiation

1.3.2.2.1 Foot-in-the-door technique

Foot-in-the-door technique (FITD) is a compliance tactic that involves getting a person to agree to a large request by first setting them up by having that person agreeing to a modest request.

In a study, a team of psychologists telephoned housewives in California and asked

if the women would answer a few questions about the household products they used. Three days later, the psychologists called again. This time, they asked if they could send five or six men into the house to go through cupboards and storage places as part of a 2-hr enumeration of household products. The investigators found these women were more than twice as likely to agree to the 2-hr request as a group of housewives asked only the larger request. Numerous experiments have shown that foot-in-the-door tactics work well in persuading people to comply, especially if the request is a pro-social request. Research has shown that FITD techniques work over the computer via email, in addition to face-to-face requests.

Examples

“Can I go over to Sita’s house for an hour?” followed by *“Can I stay the night?”*

“Can I borrow the car for 1 day?” followed by *“Can I borrow the car for the weekend?”*

“Would you sign this petition for our cause?” followed by *“Would you donate to our cause?”*

“May I return the magazine a few hours late?” followed by *“May I return it in next week?”*

1.3.2.2.2 Door-in-the-face technique

The door-in-the-face (DITF) technique is a persuasion method. Compliance with the request of concern is enhanced by first making an extremely large request that the respondent will obviously turn down, with a metaphorical slamming of a door in the persuader’s face. The respondent is then more likely to accede to a second, more reasonable request than if this second request were made without the first, extreme request. Cialdini (Cialdini, 2001) suggests that this is a form of reciprocity, e.g. the [induced] sharp negative response to the first request creates a sense of debt or guilt that the second request offers to clear. Alternately, a reference point (or framing) construal may explain this phenomenon, as the initial bad offer sets a reference point from which the second offer looks like an improvement.

One of the classic experiments to test the door in the face technique is where Cialdini asked students to volunteer to counsel juvenile delinquents for two hours a week for two years. After their refusal, they were asked to chaperone juvenile delinquents on a one-day trip to the zoo. 50% agreed to chaperone the trip to the zoo as compared to 17% of participants who only received the zoo request.

Examples

Other examples of the door-in-the-face technique include:

“Will you donate Rs.1000 to our organization?” [Response is no].
“Oh. Well, could you donate Rs.10 ?”

“Can you help me do all this work?”

“Well, can you help me with this bit?”

1.3.2.2.3 Low-Ball Technique

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The low-ball is a persuasion and selling technique in which an item or service is offered at a lower price than is actually intended to be charged, after which the price is raised to increase profits.

A successful low-ball relies on the balance of making the initial request attractive enough to gain agreement, whilst not making the second request so outrageous that the customer refuses.

First propose an attractive price on an idea/item which you are confident that the other person/buyer will accept.

Maximise their buy-in, in particular by getting both verbal and public commitment to this, e.g. down payment or hand-shaking. Make it clear that the decision to purchase is from their own free will.

Change the agreement to what you really want. The person/buyer may complain, but they should agree to the change if the low-ball is managed correctly.

The experimenters asked students to participate in an experiment. 56% agreed, before being told that the experiment started at 7am. They then told the volunteers that the study was scheduled at 7am, and the volunteers could withdraw if they wished. None did so, and 95% turned up at the scheduled time (the Low-Ball group). When a control group were asked to participate and were told the unsocial timing of the experiment up front, only 24% agreed to participate.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) In regard to Compliance, what are principles observed by Cialdini? Support your arguments with research findings.

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- 2) What is credibility? Discuss credibility factor as influencing compliance. Give evidence in terms of research findings.

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- 3) How does liking or friendship affect a person's compliance? Give suitable evidences and examples.

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4) What is meant by scarcity factor? How does it contribute to compliance?

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5) Describe and discuss each of the four compliance strategies. FIDT, DIFT, LBT

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1.3.3 Obedience

Obedience is a form of social influence where an individual acts in response to a direct order from another individual, who is usually an authority figure. It is assumed that without such an order the person would not have acted in this way. Obedience occurs when you are told to do something (authority), whereas conformity happens through social pressure (the norms of the majority). Obedience involves a hierarchy of power/status.

Therefore, the person giving the order has a higher status than the person receiving the order. Obedience is the act of obeying orders from others.

As humans we are indoctrinated to obey authority figures. This training begins from the moment of birth as we are reliant on our parents to take care of our every need, in turn being subservient to our authority figure or parents. As we begin to mature and are thrust into society we obtain more influential authority figures from outside the household.

Schools have a system of order and authority. Teachers give us guidance and direction academically and even socially because we begin to learn how to act in a group or societal setting. The school environment is all a preparation for careers.

When we begin working most of us work for a company or organisation with all levels of management who we must be obedient to. As we mature we are given more and more responsibility over our actions and judgments, thus making it more beneficial to our societal advancement to be obedient. Stanley Milgram, a famous social psychologist, performs a number of experiments on human obedience in the 1960's.

Obedience, in human behaviour, is the quality of being obedient, which describes the act of carrying out commands, or being actuated. Obedience differs from compliance, which is behaviour influenced by peers, and from conformity, which is behaviour intended to match that of the majority. Humans have been shown to be surprisingly obedient in the presence of perceived legitimate authority figures, as demonstrated by the Milgram experiment in the 1960s, which was carried out by Stanley Milgram to discover how the Nazis managed to get ordinary people

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to take part in the mass murders of the Holocaust. The experiment showed that obedience to authority was the norm, not the exception

1.3.3.1 Forms of Obedience

Obedience is the tendency to follow orders given by an authority figure. This can be explained by Milgram's Agency Theory, which states that we are in either one of two states. Forms of human obedience include:

- 1 obedience to laws;
- 1 obedience to social norms;
- 1 obedience to a monarch, government, organisation, religion, or church;
- 1 obedience to God;
- 1 obedience to self-imposed constraints, such as a vow of chastity;
- 1 obedience of a spouse or child to a husband/wife or parent respectively;
- 1 obedience to management in the workplace.

1.3.3.2 Cultural Attitudes to Obedience

Obedience is regarded as a virtue in many traditional cultures; historically, children have been expected to be obedient to their elders, slaves to their owners, serfs to their lords in feudal society, lords to their king, and everyone to God. Even long after slavery ended in the United States, the Black codes required black people to obey and submit to whites, on pain of lynching.

In some Christian weddings, obedience was formally included along with honor and love as part of a conventional bride's (but not the bridegroom's) wedding vow. This came under attack with women's suffrage and the feminist movement. Today its inclusion in marriage vows is optional in some denominations.

As the middle classes have gained political power, the power of authority has been progressively eroded, with the introduction of democracy as a major turning point in attitudes to obedience and authority.

Since the democides and genocides of the First World War and Second World War periods, obedience has come to be regarded as a far less desirable quality in Western cultures. The civil rights and protest movements in the second half of the twentieth century marked a remarkable reduction in respect for authority in Western cultures, and greater respect for individual ethical judgment as a basis for moral decisions.

1.3.3.3 Obedience Training of Human Beings

Some animals can easily be trained to be obedient by employing operant conditioning, for example obedience schools exist to condition dogs into obeying the orders of human owners. Obedience training seems to be particularly effective on social animals a category that includes human beings; other animals do not respond well to such training.

Learning to obey adult rules is a major part of the socialisation process in childhood, and many techniques are used by adults to modify the behaviour of children. Additionally, extensive training is given in armies to make soldiers capable of

obeying orders in situations where an untrained person would not be willing to follow orders. Soldiers are initially ordered to do seemingly trivial things, such as picking up the sergeant's hat off the floor, marching in just the right position, or marching and standing in formation. The orders gradually become more demanding, until an order to the soldiers to place themselves into the midst of gunfire gets a knee-jerk obedient response.

1.3.3.4 Experimental Studies of Human Obedience

Obedience has been extensively studied by psychologists since the Second World War — the Milgram Experiment and the Stanford Prison Experiment are the most commonly cited experimental studies of human obedience, while the Hofling hospital experiment was an early field experiment (Hofling CK et al., 1966)

The Milgram experiments, the first of which was carried out in 1961, were the earliest investigations of the power of authority figures as well as the lengths to which participants would go as a result of their influence. Milgram's results showed that, contrary to expectations, a majority of civilian volunteers would obey orders to apply electric shocks to another person until they were unconscious or dead. Prior to these experiments, most of Milgram's colleagues had predicted that only sadists would be willing to follow the experiment to their conclusion.

Obedience is a basic human trait and is a deeply ingrained behaviour. Some form of obedience is a requirement for function in modern society. The Milgram shock experiment proves these characteristics. The experiments first took place at Yale University and eventually involved over one thousand participants from all walks of life.

Two individuals were to enter a psychology laboratory and take part in a study of memory and learning. One of them was to be the teacher and the other the student. The student was instructed to learn a list of word pairs and whenever the student made a mistake would receive an electric shock of increasing intensity. However the focus of the experiment is the teacher. The teacher watches the student being strapped into place and then taken to a shock generator. The shock generator features switches ranging from 15 to 450 volts in 15 volt increments. If the student gets the answer correct the teacher is to move on to the next problem. If the answer is wrong the teacher is to shock the student beginning with 15 volts.

The teacher, being the focus of the experiment, does not know that the student is not really being shocked and that the student is really an actor. Each time the student answers incorrectly and is shocked, he pretends to be shocked. As the teacher watches the student being tortured by the electric shocks, he continues to follow the orders he was instructed. The experiment proves that obedience is something humans teach one another and follow through with.

Milgram thinks the problems lies in the structure of society, people are just following orders of superiors and are not directly responsible for his or her actions.

Also, Milgram himself had already conducted several studies, which had shown that obedience tended to increase with the prestige of the authority figure. In these studies, an undergraduate research assistant posing as a Yale professor had a much greater influence than did someone of lesser status, regardless of the prestige of the institution in which the study was based.

1.3.3.4.1 The Stanford Prison Experiment

Unlike the Milgram experiment, which studied the obedience of individuals, the 1971 Stanford prison experiment studied the behaviour of people in groups, and in particular the willingness of people to obey orders and adopt abusive roles in a situation where they were placed in the position of being submissive or dominant by a higher authority.

In the experiment, a group of volunteers was divided into two groups and placed in a “prison,” with one group in the position of playing prison guards, and other group in the position of “prisoners”.

In this case, the experimenters acted as authority figures at the start of the experiment, but then delegated responsibility to the “guards,” who enthusiastically followed the experimenters’ instructions, and in turn assumed the roles of abusive authority figures, eventually going far beyond the experimenters’ original instruction in their efforts to dominate and brutalize the “prisoners.” At the same time, the prisoners adopted a submissive role with regard to their tormentors, even though they knew that they were in an experiment, and that their «captors» were other volunteers, with no actual authority other than that being role-played in the experiment.

The Stanford experiment demonstrated not only obedience (of the “guards” to the experimenters, and the “prisoners” to both the guards and experimenters), but also high levels of compliance and conformity.

1.3.3.4.2 The Hofling Hospital Experiment

Both the Milgram and Stanford experiments were conducted in experimental circumstances. In 1966, psychiatrist Charles K. Hofling published the results of a field experiment on obedience in the nurse-physician relationship in its natural hospital setting. Nurses, unaware they were taking part in an experiment, were ordered by unknown doctors to administer dangerous doses of a (fictional) drug to their patients. Although several hospital rules disallowed administering the drug under the circumstances, 21 out of the 22 nurses would have given the patient an overdose of medicine.

1.3.3.4.3 Factors that Increase Obedience

Milgram found that subjects were more likely to obey in some circumstances than others. Obedience was highest when:

- 1 Commands were given by an authority figure rather than another volunteer
- 1 The experiments were done at a prestigious institution
- 1 The authority figure was present in the room with the subject
- 1 The learner was in another room
- 1 The subject did not see other subjects disobeying commands

In everyday situations, people obey orders because they want to get rewards, because they want to avoid the negative consequences of disobeying, and because they believe an authority is legitimate. In more extreme situations, people obey even when they are required to violate their own values or commit crimes. Researchers think several factors cause people to carry obedience to extremes:

People justify their behaviour by assigning responsibility to the authority rather than themselves.

People define the behaviour that's expected of them as routine.

People don't want to be rude or offend the authority.

People obey easy commands first and then feel compelled to obey more and more difficult commands. This process is called entrapment, and it illustrates the foot-in-the-door phenomenon.

Stanley Milgram has pointed out a human characteristic that may very well be in each and every one of us. These experiments show us that ordinary people will go to any length to be subservient to an authority figure, no matter the moral dilemma. Only when we can differentiate between being a good subject and having good morals will we be able to make a distinction between being obedient and committing crimes by our own individual actions.

Self Assessment Questions

1) What are the various forms of obedience?

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2) How are humans trained to obey?

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3) What factors influence obedience? Put forward experimental studies on humans in regard to obedience.

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4) Describe the Milgram experiment . What did you learn from it in regard to obedience?

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5) What factors increase obedience?

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1.4 LET US SUM UP

Social influence is the change in behaviour that one person causes in another, intentionally or unintentionally, as a result of the way the changed person perceives themselves in relationship to the influencer, other people and society in general. Social influence can also be defined as the process by which individuals make real changes to their feelings and behaviours as a result of interaction with others who are perceived to be similar, desirable, or expert. Three areas of social influence are conformity, compliance and obedience. *Conformity* is changing how you behave to be more like others. This plays to belonging and esteem needs as we seek the approval and friendship of others. Conformity can run very deep, as we will even change our beliefs and values to be like those of our peers and admired superiors. *Compliance* is where a person does something that they are asked to do by another. They may choose to comply or not to comply, although the thoughts of social reward and punishment may lead them to compliance when they really do not want to comply. *Obedience* is different from compliance in that it is obeying an order from someone that you accept as an authority figure. In compliance, you have some choice. In obedience, you believe that you do not have a choice. Many military officers and commercial managers are interested only in obedience.

1.5 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Define the term Social Influence and discuss its various types.
- 2) Describe the factors associated with conformity.
- 3) describe in detail the Asch's study on conformity.
- 4) What do you mean by compliance? Discuss various factors leading to compliance.
- 5) Describe the Stanford Prison experiment and indicate its contribution in understanding obedience.
- 6) What is the significance of Hofling Hospital experiment? Discuss the same in the context of obedience.

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UNIT 2 PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO PRO- SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

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- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Pro-social Behaviour
 - 2.2.1 Definition and Description
 - 2.2.2 Pro-social Behaviour and Altruism
 - 2.2.3 Certain Historical Aspects of Prosocial Behaviour
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2.0 INTRODUCTION

Pro-social behaviour is defined as “...any act performed with the goal of benefiting another person” (Aronson, Wilson, & Akert, 2004 p. 382). How is it possible to differentiate the meaning or motivation or consequences between a ten rupees donation to charity and rescuing a drowning child? This is not a topic confined within one discipline. Even a cursory review of the literature reveals that psychologists, philosophers, economists, sociobiologists, and others all have distinct and often conflicting points of view. Prosocial are voluntary made with the intention of benefiting others. This definition focuses on the potential benefits to the person performing the prosocial behaviour. In this unit we will be dealing with noticing emergency for help, understanding how and what do in such situations, and determining and taking decisions to help. Such a helping behaviour is influenced by a large number of factors such as physical attractiveness of the person who needs help, similarity in a number of factors, whether the person is a relative and belong to kin etc. This unit deals with also the perspective of help from the victim’s point of view and one’s own personal experience. Many theoretical perspectives have also been put across in this unit which includes social learning theory and its influence on helping behaviour, the motivation and social identity theories contributing to understanding of helping behaviour empathic and reciprocity factors as to how they contribute to the understanding of helping behaviour. Lastly the unit discusses the current trends in regard to pro social behaviour.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After successful completion of this Unit, you are expected to be able to:

- 1 Define Pro-social behaviour and altruism;
- 1 Have knowledge about various factors affecting pro-social behaviour;
- 1 Explain pro-social behaviour in the light of different theories; and
- 1 Analyse the current trends in research related to pro-social behaviour.

2.2 PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

2.2.1 Definition and Description

Staub (1979) defined pro-social behaviour as voluntary behaviour intended to benefit another person. “Voluntary” emphasises the spontaneous initiative by the

actor in contrast to professional help (e.g., physicians or nurses). Pro-social behaviour may include helping, sharing, giving, and comforting (Bierhoff, 2002).

Pro-social behaviour is defined as "...any act performed with the goal of benefiting another person" (Aronson, Wilson, & Akert, 2004 p. 382). How is it possible to differentiate the meaning or motivation or consequences between a ten rupees donation to charity and rescuing a drowning child? Many researchers have attempted to narrow the parameters of discussion by focusing on subsets of prosocial behaviour such as altruism versus self-interest, helping behaviours sustained over time versus one-time events, personality variables versus situational context, the origins of empathy and others.

Pro-social behaviour is not a topic confined within one discipline. Even a cursory review of the literature reveals that psychologists, philosophers, economists, sociobiologists, and others all have distinct and often conflicting points of view. As Kohn points out, the term pro-social is so broad that it becomes essentially meaningless.

Pro-social are voluntary made with the intention of benefiting others (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1998). This definition focuses on the potential benefits to the person performing the pro-social behaviour. Nevertheless, benefiting others, but whose main goal is self-advantageous (e.g. cooperative intended to obtain a common resource), typically are not considered pro-social. Typical examples include: volunteering, sharing toys, or food with friends instrumental help (e.g., helping a peer with school assignments) costly help e.g. risking one's own life to save others and emotionally supporting others in distress e.g., comforting a peer following a disappointing experience or caring for a person who is ill.

2.2.2 Pro-social Behaviour and Altruism

Pro-social behaviour is often accompanied by psychological and social rewards for its performer. In the long run, individuals can benefit from living in a society where prosociality is common. It has been difficult for researchers to identify purely altruistic behaviours, benefiting only the recipient and not the performer. Altruism is generally defined as any form of voluntary act intended to favour another without expectation of reward (Smith & Mackie, 2000; Batson et. al., 2002; Aronson et. al., 2004).

Perhaps the first person to utilise the term altruism was the French sociologist Auguste Comte, who declared that humans have inborn drives to behave sympathetically toward others (Lee, Lee and Kang, 2003). It is a specific kind of motivation to benefit another without consciously considering for one's own self interest (Hall, 1999). In other words, altruism refers to a kind of selfless help, which is based on pure desire to help others (Aronson, Wilson, Akert, & Fehr, 2004). Nevertheless, altruism is not a synonym for pro-social behaviour.

Prosocial behaviour refers to helping behaviour of favouring another person with the goal that may involve benefits to self (Smith & Mackie, 2000; Aronson et. al., 2004). For instance, people donating money to Tsunami relief fund may not always be selfless. In the case that donation is for the sake of tax exemption, its motive would not be regarded as altruistic. The major difference between altruism and pro-social behaviour is that altruism does not involve the element of self interest (Myers, 1996).

2.2.3 Certain Historical Aspects of Prosocial Behaviour

The term pro-social behaviour was introduced in the early 1970's after the incident of Kitty Genovese case in USA (Kohn, 1990). On March 13, 1964, Kitty Genovese was murdered in front of her home. She parked her car a number of feet from her apartment when all of a sudden, a man named Winston Moseley chased her down and stabbed her in the back twice. Kitty screamed for help and a neighbour responded shouting at the criminal "Let that girl alone!" Immediately, Winston fled the scene and left the girl crawling towards her apartment. Several witnesses reported to have seen the whole scene. At that time, there was a strong degree of interest in exploring why 38 neighbours ignored the pleas and calls for help from a woman being repeatedly stabbed and ultimately murdered by her assailant.

Why were such apathy, indifference and lack of concern observed from all the neighbours of Kitty? Two social psychologists, John Darley & Bibb Latane, started asking questions why the witnesses demonstrated a lack of reaction towards the victim's need for help. They found bystander apathy is the major factor that influences helping behaviour.

The term bystander effect refers to the phenomenon in which greater the numbers of people present, the less likely people are to help a person in distress. When an emergency situation occurs, observers are more likely to take action if there are few or no other witnesses.

In a series of classic study, researchers Bibb Latane and John Darley (1969) found that the amount of time it takes the participant to take action and seek help varies depending on how many other observers are in the room. In one experiment, subjects were placed in one of three treatment conditions: alone in a room, with two other participants or with two confederates who pretended to be normal participants.

As the participants sat filling out questionnaires, smoke began to fill the room. When participants were alone, 75% reported the smoke to the experimenters. In contrast, just 38% of participants in a room with two other people reported the smoke. In the final group, the two confederates in the experiment noted the smoke and then ignored it, which resulted in only 10% of the participants reporting the smoke.

There are two major factors that contribute to the bystander effect. First, the presence of other people creates a diffusion of responsibility. Because there are other observers, individuals do not feel as much pressure to take action, since the responsibility to take action is thought to be shared among all of the present. The second reason is the need to behave in correct and socially acceptable ways. When other observers fail to react, individuals often take this as a signal that a response is not needed or not appropriate. Other researchers have found that onlookers are less likely to intervene if the situation is ambiguous (Solomon, 1978). In the case of Kitty Genovese, many of the 38 witnesses reported that they believed that they were witnessing a "lover's quarrel," and did not realise that the young woman was actually being murdered.

2.3 PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

There are five step response in emergency situations (Darley & Latane, 1969), which include the following:

2.3.1 Noticing the Emergency

In order for people to help, they must notice that an emergency has occurred. Sometimes very trivial things, such as how much of a hurry a person is in, can prevent them from noticing someone else in trouble. Darley and Batson (1973) showed that seminary students who were in a hurry to give a sermon on campus were much less likely to help an ostensibly injured confederate groaning in a doorway than were those who were not in a hurry.

2.3.2 Interpreting an Emergency as an Emergency

The next determinant of helping is whether the bystander interprets the event as an emergency. Ironically, when other bystanders are present, people are more likely to assume an emergency is something innocuous. This pluralistic ignorance occurs because people look to see others' reactions (informational influence); when they see that everyone else has a blank expression, they assume there must be no danger (Latané and Darley, 1970)

2.3.3 Assuming that it is your Responsibility to Help

The next step that must occur if helping is to take place is for someone to take responsibility. When there are many witnesses, there is a diffusion of responsibility, the phenomenon whereby each bystander's sense of responsibility to help decreases as the number of witnesses increases. Everyone assumes that someone else will help, and as a result, no one does, as happened with the Kitty Genovese murder.

2.3.4 Knowing what to do

Even if all the previous conditions are met, a person must know what form of assistance to give. If they don't, they will be unable to help.

2.3.5 Making the Decision to Help

Finally, even if you know what kind of help to give, you might decide not to intervene because you feel unqualified to help or you are too afraid of the costs to yourself. Markey (2000) examined helping in an Internet chat room situation; when the chat room group as a whole was asked to provide some information about finding profiles, the larger the group, the longer it took for anyone to help. However, when a specific person was addressed by name, that person helped quickly, regardless of group size.

2.4 FACTORS AFFECTING HELPING BEHAVIOUR

2.4.1 Physical Attractiveness

Attractiveness is defined as physical attractiveness or the attractiveness of a person's

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personality or behaviour (DeVito, 1976). Researchers believe physical attractiveness can be defined for any one individual situationally (DeVito, 1976). Physically attractive people are more likely to receive help than unattractive people (Harrell, 1978). The explanation lies in the fact, that as a society, we consciously or subconsciously tend to treat attractive individuals differently, expecting better lives for them (Berscheid, Walster, Bohrnstedt, 1973). Adams and Cohen (1976) feel physical attractiveness is a major factor in the development of prosocial behaviour in a child.

2.4.2 Similarity and Kinship

Finally, individuals are more likely to behave prosocially towards similar or likable others (Penner et al., 2005), and towards others considered to be close, especially kin (Graziano et al., 2007). Genetic relatedness aside, pro-social behaviour towards family members probably involves a sense of duty, reciprocity, and affective relationships. Individuals care more for victims who belong to their in-group rather than to their out-group (Dovidio et al. 1997; Flippen et al. 1996; Levine et al. 2002). Park and Schaller (2005) found that attitude similarity serves as a heuristic cue signaling kinship, which may motivate kin-recognition responses (e.g., prosocial behaviour) even to unrelated individuals.

2.4.3 Religiosity

Although several studies have examined the impact of donor characteristics across various domains, the findings are not as robust as those about victim characteristics. One consistent finding is that humanitarian values and religiosity are correlated with giving (Burnett 1981; Pessemier, Bemmaor, and Hanssens 1977).

2.4.4 Victim's Perspective

Batson and colleagues have shown consistently greater empathy and altruistic behaviour by individuals who are primed to take the victim's perspective (Batson, Early, and Salvarani 1997; Batson et al. 2003).

2.4.5 Personal Experience

A vast literature examines the impact of personal experience on self-protective behaviour (Weinstein, 1989, for a critical review). Although the majority of studies examine effects on victims themselves, a few assess the impact of knowing a victim as a form of personal experience (Manheimer, Mellinger & Crossley 1966 and Schiff 1977). Barnett et al. (1986) found that participants who had been raped reported greater empathy when watching a video about a rape victim than did those who had never been raped. Batson et al. (1996) found that for females but not males, the expectation of oneself receiving a shock affected self-reported empathy when one observed a same-sex peer receiving a shock. Christy and Voigt (1994) found that those who reported being abused as a child indicated that they would be more likely than those who had never been abused to intervene if they saw a child being abused.

2.4.6 Identifiable Victim Effect

Previous research has shown that people give more to identifiable victims than to unidentifiable or statistical victims (Kogut and Ritov 2005a, b; Small, Loewenstein, and Slovic 2006). This effect has even been demonstrated when no meaningful

information is provided about the identified victim (Small and Loewenstein 2003). Other identifying factors, such as showing a victim's face or being in the presence of a victim, also increase pro-social behaviour (Bohnet and Frey 1999). Charities do often describe or show images of specific victims to potential donors in their advertising campaigns, but such attempts seem designed to benefit from the identifiable victim effect (Kogut and Ritov, 2005a, b; Small et al. 2006), rather than to create "friendship" between donors and victims.

2.4.7 Attributions Concerning Victim's Responsibility

People also give more to victims who are perceived as "deserving," in other words, whose needs arise from external rather than internal causes (Weiner 1980). Thus, disabled children are deemed deserving; healthy unemployed men are not (Schmidt and Weiner 1988). Finally, the effect of deservingness on prosocial behaviour is mediated by sympathy, suggesting that giving decisions are not based on cold mental calculations (Weiner, 1980). A study carried out on the New York subway showed that people were more likely to help 'blind' rather than 'drunk' confederates who had collapsed (Piliavin, 1969).

2.4.8 Positive Friend Influence

Barry and Wentzel (2006) supported the notion that friends in particular can be important socialisers of pro-social behaviour. Children are similar to their friends in the degree to which they display pro-social behaviour and are motivated to behave this way (Wentzel, Barry, & Caldwell, 2004; Wentzel & Caldwell, 1997). Adolescents who have friends are more likely to be pro-social than those without friends (McGuire & Weisz, 1982).

2.4.9 Gender

Females engage in prosocial behaviours more frequently than males (Fabes, Carlo, Kupanoff, & Laible, 1999), which is consistent across ratings from parents, teachers, and peers (Holmgren, Eisenberg, & Fabes, 1998). Additionally, observational studies have indicated that females are more likely than males to share and cooperate when interacting (Burford, Foley, Rollins, & Rosario, 1996). Beutel and Johnson (2004) reported that in a study of 12 through 17 year-olds, females placed more importance on prosocial values than males at younger ages, and the gender gap in prosocial values was larger at older ages. Eagly and Crowley (1986) did a meta-analysis and found that men are more likely to help in chivalrous, heroic ways, and women are more likely to help in nurturant ways involving long-term commitment.

2.4.10 Age

Older adolescent males placed less importance on prosocial values than younger adolescent males (Beutel & Johnson, 2004). Further, in a study of adolescent soccer players' behaviours, recruited from age groups of under 13, under 15, and under 17, significant differences among the age groups indicated that the oldest group displayed more frequent antisocial behaviours and less frequent prosocial behaviours compared to the younger groups (Kavussanu, Seal, & Phillips, 2006). However, there appears to be an increase in the use of some prosocial behaviours after a certain point in adolescence, as Eisenberg et al. (2005) found that prosocial moral reasoning and perspective-taking abilities showed increases with age from

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late adolescence to early adulthood, whereas helping and displaying sympathy did not increase with age.

2.4.11 Personality

Research following children from early childhood to adulthood supports the existence of the long-debated altruistic or prosocial personality (Eisenberg et al., 1999). Individual differences in prosociality are linked to sociability, low shyness, extroversion, and agreeableness, although specific prosocial behaviours may require a combination of additional traits, such as perceived self-efficacy in the case of helping (Penner et al., 2005). Personality and contextual variables are likely to interact in determining prosocial behaviour. For example, agreeable individuals were more likely to help an outgroup member than low-agreeableness individuals, but agreeableness was not associated with helping an ingroup member (Graziano et al., 2007).

While, Hartshorne and May (1929) found only a .23 correlation between different kinds of helping behaviours in children, and several studies have found that those who scored high on a personality test of altruism were not much more likely to help than those who scored low. People's personality is clearly not the only determinant of helping. Instead, it seems to be that different kinds of people are likely to help in different situations.

2.4.12 Effects of Positive Moods: Feel Good, Do Good

People who are in a good mood are more likely to help. For example, Isen and Levin (1972) did a study in a shopping mall where subjects either found or did not find a dime in a phone booth. As the person emerged from the booth, a confederate walked by and dropped a sheaf of papers; 84% of those who found the dime helped compared with 4% of those who did not find the dime. North, Tarrang, & Hargreaves (2004) found that people are more likely to help others when in a good mood for a number of other reasons, including doing well on a test, receiving a gift, thinking happy thoughts, and listening to pleasant music.

Good moods can increase helping for three reasons: (1) good moods make us interpret events in a sympathetic way; (2) helping another prolongs the good mood, whereas not helping deflates it; (3) good moods increase self-attention, and this in turn leads us to be more likely to behave according to our values and beliefs (which tend to favor altruism).

2.5 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

There are a large number of theories which explain pro-social behaviour and these are described and discussed below:

2.5.1 Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory suggests that pro-social behaviour is learned (Bandura, 1977; Bandura & McDonald, 1963; Batson, 1998). Observing role models who are loved or respected, such as parents or authorities, engaged in pro-social behaviour, demonstrates how people can and should behave prosocially. Rewards reinforce helping behaviour; punishments reduce unhelpful or hurtful behaviour. Within a group context, social recognition, not just private reward, increases pro-

social behaviour (Fisher & Ackerman, 1998). Observational modeling processes with reinforcement will result in learning over time (Compeau & Higgins, 1995; Lim *et al.*, 1997).

2.5.2 Motivation Perspective

Theorists differentiate altruistic prosocial behaviour from egoistic prosocial behaviour depending upon the motivation of the helper (Batson, 1991; Nelson, 1999; Piliavin & Charng, 1990). Altruistic prosocial behaviour is motivated purely by the desire to increase another person's welfare; egoistic prosocial behaviour is motivated by the desire to increase one's own welfare or that of one's group or cause through helping others (Batson, 1998; MacIntyre, 1967).

Some researchers believe that pro-social behaviour does not need to be based on unobservable underlying motivations of children (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989), but other researchers believe that another person's well-being must be of primary concern in prosocial behaviours (Cialdini, Kenrick, & Bauman, 1976). It is generally understood that an intention of prosocial behaviours is to achieve positive consequences for others (Jackson & Tisak, 2001; Tisak & Ford, 1986), but it is possible that there are other reasons children behave prosocially as well. Children's expectancies may influence their likelihood of engaging in prosocial behaviours. Adolescents who expect positive adult reactions to their prosocial behaviours report engaging in more prosocial and less aggressive behaviours (Wyatt & Carlo, 2002).

2.5.3 Social Identity Theory

Social identity theory and self-categorisation theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner *et al.*, 1987) are helpful in understanding why some people exhibit substantial prosocial behaviour over time.

Social identity theory is based on the premise that people identify with particular groups in order to enhance their self-esteem. Identification leads to selective social comparisons that emphasise intergroup differences along dimensions. This leads to favouring the ingroup and confer positive distinctiveness on the ingroup when compared to the salient outgroup (Hogg & Abrams, 1988).

Categorising the self and others in terms of groups accentuates the similarities between group members with respect to their fit with the relevant group prototype or 'cognitive representation of features that describe and prescribe attributes of the group' (Hogg & Terry, 2000). The prototype guides the participants' understanding of the group and its expected behaviours and attitudes. People identified with a group will thus be more likely to exhibit behaviours that are consistent with shared group norms and will cooperate with the group and its members.

Group identification is an important antecedent to cooperative behaviours related to group maintenance and survival (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Kramer, 1993; Mael & Ashforth, 1995; Tyler, 1999).

2.5.4 Biological Perspective

Empathy, altruism and prosocial behaviour are considered vital for the good functioning of society. Although psychological theories emphasise the importance

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of cognition and socialisation, genes also have a role to play. Monozygotic (MZ) twin pairs share 100% of their genes, whereas dizygotic (DZ) twin pairs share 50%; thus the comparison of MZ and DZ twin similarities and differences allows for estimates to be made of genetic influences (Plomin et al. 2001). Several studies have found that by adulthood, approximately 50% of the variance in altruism, empathy and social responsibility is due to genes and 50% to non-genetic factors (Rushton et al. 1986; Rushton 2004).

2.6 NEGATIVE-STATE RELIEF HYPOTHESIS

Negative State Relief Model, views empathic concern as being accompanied by feelings of sadness that the helper tries to relieve through helping someone in need (Smith, Keating, & Stotland, 1989; Cialindi, et al., 1987; Schroeder, Dovidio, Sibicky, Matthews, & Allen, 1988). Here, the motivation for prosocial behaviour is based on increasing the welfare of both the helper and helpee. Three prominent features of the Negative State Relief Model are that: (1) helpers experience empathic concern; (2) such concern is accompanied by feelings of sadness and (3) helpers attempt to relieve such feelings by helping others.

Cialdini's (1987) experiments involved participants taking the place of people receiving electric shocks. However, high empathy participants were less inclined to help if they had been praised by the researchers. It is thought that this praise helped to lift their mood so that it was not necessary to help the person receiving the shocks.

When people feel guilty, they are more likely to help. For example, Harris et al. (1975) found that churchgoers were more likely to donate money after confession.

2.7 EMPATHY – ALTRUISM HYPOTHESIS

Batson (1987, 1991) introduced the empathy-altruism hypothesis, which states refers to “ the claim that feeling empathic emotion for someone in need evokes altruistic motivation to relieve that need has been called the empathy-altruism hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, the greater the empathetic emotion, the greater the altruistic motivation.” (Batson et. al., 2002).

According to the Empathy-Altruism Hypothesis, empathic concern motivates helpers to enhance the welfare of those in need rather than avoid the situation instead (Smith, Keating, & Stotland, 1989; Baston, 1987).

In a study by Toi and Batson, (1982), students listened to a taped interview with a student who had ostensibly broken both legs in an accident and was behind in classes. Two factors were manipulated: empathetic vs. non-empathetic set, manipulated by instructions given to Ss; and the costs of helping, manipulated by whether or not the injured student was expected to be seen every day once she returned to class. The dependent variable was whether Ss responded to a request to help the injured student catch up in class. As the empathy-altruism hypothesis predicted, people in the high empathy condition helped regardless of cost, while those in the low empathy condition helped only if the cost of not helping was high.

2.7.1 Empathic-Joy Hypothesis

Smith, Keating, and Stotland's (1989) hypothesis proposes that empathic concern

is based on a helper's overarching sensitivity to a victim's emotional state and a subsequent heightened sense of vicarious happiness and relief upon the fulfillment of the recipient's needs. The authors propose that empathic witnesses to someone in need may regard empathic joy as being more achievable and rewarding than would be a self-focused witness, and thus have greater motivation to help.

The three prominent features of the Empathic-Joy Hypothesis are that:

- 1) helpers experience empathic concern;
- 2) this concern is a function of their sensitivity to another's needs; and
- 3) the awareness of relief for another's distress promotes subsequent relief of the helper's empathic concern as well as a sense of joy.

2.7.2 Self-Efficacy Hypothesis

This hypothesis reflects a combination of proposals from authors regarding correlates to helping behaviours. According to Midlarsky (1968) individuals' level of competence with a given skill can influence helping behaviour, especially in times of need. Such competence may increase the likelihood of helping through increased certainty over what to do, along with the decreased fear of making a mistake and decreased stress over the situation (Withey, 1962; Janis 1962, Midlarsky, 1968; Staub, 1971).

2.8 RECIPROCITY AND SOCIAL NORMS

The concept of reciprocity" is defined in settings in which individuals act in a more cooperative manner in response to the positive or friendly behaviour of others. As a result, reciprocity as a reputational motivation is very closely linked to the idea that the more others contribute, the more one gives. For instance, although contributing to charitable organisations does not benefit the donor directly, she may still gain in the long run, because she expects to benefit from reciprocity in the future when she will need help. Leider et al. (2009) established that giving is motivated, at least in part, by future interaction (enforced reciprocity).

Social norms also encourage people to find ways by which to avoid being generous when it is not completely necessary. As suggested by Stephen Meier (2004), reciprocity and concern to conform to social norms are closely tied together. In particular, by observing the behaviour of others, one translates this behaviour into a recipe of what one 'should do'.

2.9 CURRENT TRENDS

Genetics also contribute to individual variation in prosociality. Research on adults finds that prosociality is substantially heritable. Research on young children shows lower heritability, demonstrated by one longitudinal twin study showing increase in the heritability of parent-rated prosociality, from 30 % at age 2 to 60 % at age 7 (Knafo & Plomin, 2006). Gene-environment correlations can also shape individual differences in prosociality. For example, children's low prosociality is related to parents' use of negative discipline and affection.

This relationship can be traced back to children's genetic tendencies, implying that the genetically influenced low prosociality can initiate a negative reaction from

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parents (Knafo & Plomin, 2006). Some evidence suggests that children in Western societies are less pro-social than children in other cultures, but some studies find no differences along these lines (see review by Eisenberg et al., 2006).

A field study by Levine, Norenzayan, and Philbrick (2001) found large cultural differences in spontaneously helping strangers. For example, the proportion of individuals helping a stranger with a hurt leg pick up dropped magazines ranged from 22 % to 95 % across 23 cultures. Perhaps, cultures differ substantially in what each promotes as prosocial behaviour (Eisenberg et al., 2006).

It has been suggested that there are two reasons for cultural differences in altruism (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989) first is Industrial societies place value on competition and personal success and secondly Co-operation at the home in non-industrial societies promotes altruism.

2.10 LET US SUM UP

Pro-social behaviours are voluntary behaviours made with the intention of benefiting others. Prosocial behaviour is often accompanied with psychological and social rewards for its performer. In the long run, individuals can benefit from living in a society where prosociality is common. Altruism is generally defined as any form of voluntary act intended to favour another without expectation of reward. There are various factors that affect the pro-social behaviour e.g. (i) Noticing the emergency, (ii) Interpreting an emergency as an emergency, (iii) Assuming that it is your responsibility to help, (iv) Knowing what to do, (v) Making the decision to help. Amongst the various factors affecting helping behaviour, we saw that (i) Physical attractiveness, (ii) Similarity and kinship, (iii) Religiosity, (iv) Victim's perspective, (v) Personal experience, (vi) Gender, (vii) Age, (viii) Personality etc.

It has been suggested that there are two reasons for cultural differences in altruism (Eisenberg & Mussen, 1989) first is Industrial societies place value on competition and personal success and secondly Co-operation at the home in non-industrial societies promotes altruism.

2.11 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Define pro-social behaviour with factor leading us to help in a particular situation.
- 2) Discuss various factors that affect pro-social behaviour.
- 3) Critically evaluate theories of pro-social behaviour.

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UNIT 3 INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION

Structure

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3.2.3 Similarity

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3.3.4.5 Self Esteem

3.4 Let Us Sum Up

3.5 Unit End Questions

3.6 Suggested Readings and References

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Relationships with the individuals around us are key to one's social existence. Any given interaction is characterised by a certain level of intensity, which is conveyed by individual and interpersonal behaviour, including the more subtle nonverbal behavioural information of interpersonal attraction. The words "like" and "love," "dislike" and "hate" are among the most frequently used in the English language. Everyone knows what is meant by these terms. Therefore, when we state that we feel "attracted" to a certain person, it is unlikely that we will be asked to define our use of the verb "attracted." Interpersonal attraction is the attraction between

people which leads to friendships and romantic relationships. The study of interpersonal attraction is a major area of research in social psychology. In this unit we will be discussing how Interpersonal attraction is related to how much we like, love, dislike, or hate someone. We will consider interpersonal attraction as a force acting between two people that tends to draw them together and resist their separation. We would also provide the causative factors to interpersonal attraction, as for example similarity, thinking alike etc.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After completion of this Unit, you will be able to:

- 1 Define Interpersonal attraction;
- 1 Elucidate the factors contributing to Interpersonal attraction;
- 1 Analyse Interpersonal attraction in the light of different theories;and
- 1 Explain how rewarding or complementing in Interpersonal attraction reduces negative emotions.

3.2 INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION

To the query why it is that a particular person has evoked our positive regard, probably we will reply by making reference to some of the person's "good qualities" such as the person's honesty, sense of humor, or even the particular hair style that the person sports etc. While explanations referring to qualities which seem to "compel" admiration are frequently given, it must be kept in mind that interpersonal attraction is much more complicated than such explanations would imply.

In some cases, people are attracted to those persons whom they perceive as similar to themselves. The effect is very small for superficial features like clothes or race but very strong for perceived similarity of attitudes.

In certain other cases, we like people who seem to agree with us because

- a) we think they're smart,
- b) we will probably get along, and
- c) they'll probably like us too.

To pretend to agree with someone even when you do not really, for the purpose of getting something they can give you, like a job, is called ingratiation. In general this works best if you pretend to agree in about 70%. Research shows that less is not enough, and more is both suspicious and boring.

Interpersonal attraction has been an important topic of research in psychology, because humans are social animals, and attraction serves an important function in forming a social network, which in turn provides security and satisfies people's need to belong to a social group (Baumeister & Bushman, 2008).

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In assessing the nature of attraction, psychologists have used methods such as questionnaires, survey, and rating scale to determine level of one's attraction toward another. Here, the effects of similarity, social reward, familiarity, and physical attractiveness are examined to see how they impact interpersonal attraction. When measuring interpersonal attraction, one must refer to the qualities of the attracted as well as the qualities of the attractor to achieve predictive accuracy. It is suggested that to determine attraction, personality and situation must be taken into account. Many factors leading to interpersonal attraction have been studied. The most frequently studied are: physical attractiveness, propinquity, familiarity, similarity, complementarity, reciprocal liking, and reinforcement. We will discuss each factor one by one.

3.2.1 Physical Attractiveness

Despite the old sayings that “beauty is only skin deep” and “you can not judge a book by its cover”, we tend to operate according to Aristotle's 2000-year-old pronouncement that “personal beauty is a greater recommendation than any letter of introduction”.

One of the most commonly cited factors influencing attraction is physical attractiveness. It is indeed well known that most people show a substantial preference for attractive persons over unattractive others (Baumeister & Bushman, 2008). Perhaps the advantage of good looks and the inferences people make when they see a physically attractive person are the reasons for getting attracted to another person.

Studies have shown that when people see an attractive person, they believe that there is more than physical beauty that they see, and they tend to assume certain internal qualities within the person, such as kindness, outgoing, etc. (Barocas & Karoly, 1972). To illustrate this factor, let us take the research illustrating this relationship between physical attractiveness and its stereotypes. For instance, a study on popularity among adolescents was carried out by Cavior & Dokecki in 1973. They found that when physical attractiveness was compared to perceived attitude similarity, physical attractiveness had a stronger effect on popularity. These findings suggest that individuals' perceptions of attitude similarity with those of others may be strongly influenced by more automatic judgments of physical attractiveness. Such demonstrations of preferential treatment may have significant implications at the level of society, as well. For example, in one jury task simulation experiment, more attractive defendants were found to be evaluated more positively and with less certainty of guilt than were other less attractive defendants.

Even though physical attractiveness is unrelated to objective measure of internal qualities such as intelligence and personality, many researches indicate that bias for beauty is pervasive in society

3.2.1.1 Research on Physical Attractiveness Stereotype

In one of the first studies of the physical attractiveness stereotype, college students were asked to look at pictures of men and women who either were good-looking, average, or homely and to then evaluate their personalities. Results indicated that the students tended to assume that physically attractive persons possessed a host of socially desirable personality traits as compared to those who were unattractive. Consistent with the physical attractiveness stereotype, it was

also reported from research that beautiful and handsome characters were significantly more likely to be portrayed as virtuous, romantically active, and successful than their less attractive counterparts. Over the past thirty-five years, many researchers have examined this stereotype, and two separate meta-analyses of these studies reveal that physically attractive people are perceived to be more sociable, successful, happy, dominant, sexually warm, mentally healthy, intelligent, and socially skilled than those who are unattractive.

Although the above findings are based solely on samples from individualistic cultures, the physical attractiveness stereotype also occurs in collectivist cultures, but its content is a bit different.

Attractiveness and Job-Related Outcomes

Field and laboratory studies conducted in both individualistic and collectivistic cultures indicate that physical attractiveness does have a moderate impact in a variety of job-related outcomes, including hiring, salary, and promotion decisions. In one representative study, it was found that there was a significant difference between the starting salaries of good-looking men and those with slow average faces. For women, facial attractiveness did not influence their starting salaries, but it did substantially impact their later salaries. Once hired, women who were above average in facial attractiveness typically earned \$4,200 more per year than women who were below average in attractiveness.

For attractive and unattractive men, this difference in earning power per year was \$5,200. Further, although neither height nor weight affected a woman's starting salary, being 20% or more overweight reduced a man's starting salary by more than \$2,000. Overall, the research literature informs us that physical appearance does indeed influence success on the job.

Alan Feingold (1992) conducted a meta-analysis of more than ninety studies that investigated whether physically attractive and physically unattractive people actually differed in their basic personality traits. His analysis indicated no significant relationships between physical attractiveness and such traits as intelligence, dominance, self-esteem, and mental health.

3.2.2 Propinquity/Proximity

According to Rowland Miller's *Intimate Relationships* text, the propinquity effect can be defined as: "the more we see and interact with a person, the more likely he or she is to become our friend or intimate partner." This effect is very similar to the mere exposure effect in that the more a person is exposed to a stimulus, the more the person likes it; however, there are a few exceptions to the mere exposure effect.

3.2.2.1 Proximity as an Intensifier of Sentiments

A frequently advanced and commonly accepted notion is that propinquity, or proximity, has a strong influence on one's friendship choices. Stated in its simplest form, the proposition is as follows: Other things being equal, the closer two individuals are located geographically, the more likely it is that they will be attracted to each other. Studies demonstrating the impact of proximity on friendship choices are so numerous that we will mention only a few.

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Several investigators have collected data which indicate that students tend to develop stronger friendships with those students who share their classes, or their dormitory or apartment building, or who sit near them, than with those who are geographically located only slightly farther away (Byrne, 1961a). Clerks in a large department store and members of a bomber crew have been found to develop closer relations with those who happen to work next to them than with co-workers a few feet away (Zander and Havelin, 1960).

One of the more interesting studies demonstrating the relationship between proximity and friendship choice was conducted by Festinger, Schachter, and Back (1950). These investigators examined the development of friendships in a new housing project for married students. The housing development studies consisted of small houses arranged in U-shaped courts, such that all except the end houses faced onto a grassy area. The two end houses in each court faced onto the street. Festinger (1951) arrived at the intriguing conclusion that to a great extent architects can determine the social life of the residents of their projects. He found that the two major factors affecting the friendships which developed were (1) sheer distance between houses and (2) the direction in which a house faced. Friendships developed more frequently between next-door neighbors, less frequently between people whose houses were separated by another house, and so on. As the distance between houses increased, the number of friendships fell off so rapidly that it was rare to find a friendship between persons who lived in houses that were separated by more than four or five other houses.

Festinger, Schachter, and Back also found that architectural feature which brought an individual into proximity with other residents tended to increase that person's popularity. It was found, for example, that the positions of the stairways enabled the residents of the apartments near the entrances and exits of the stairways to make more friends than other residents. Similarly, the position of the mailboxes in each building improved the social life of the residents of the apartment near which they were located.

Another interesting finding has been that integrated housing produced increased racial harmony. Deutsch and Collins (1958), for example, concluded on the basis of their data that integrated housing should be encouraged since such integration helps eradicate racial prejudice. Segregationists, however, have concluded that since the evidence suggests that integration would lead to interracial friendships and "race mixing," segregation should be preserved at all costs.

3.2.2.2 Increased Probability of Acquiring Information

What underlies the often obtained relationship between proximity and sentiment? Proximity appears to allow, an opportunity to obtain information about the other person and accumulates experience regarding the rewards or punishments one is likely to receive from the other person.

Thus with decreasing distances sentiments such as likes and dislikes, especially the strong sentiments of love and hate, are not likely to be felt for people about whom we have minimal information and with whom we have had little experience.

Hence if we know the degree of proximity between two people, and do not have knowledge of the content of the information exchange such proximity has made possible, we cannot make a prediction concerning whether a positive sentiment or a negative sentiment will develop. Therefore one may state that there are a number of factors which may make such a conclusion erroneous.

It appears that there is a somewhat greater tendency for proximity to breed attraction than hostility. Newcomb has advanced the hypothesis that proximity should produce positive rather than negative attraction. He argued that when persons interact, the reward-punishment ratio is more often such as to be reinforcing than extinguishing. (Newcombe, 1956, p. 576). Thus, he reasons that the information which proximity permits is more likely to be favorable than unfavourable and that liking, therefore, will more often result from proximity than disliking. Since people are to a great extent dependent upon one another for satisfaction of their needs, it seems probable that individuals generally take care to reward others as much as possible in interaction with them.

3.2.2.3 Heider's Balance Theory

The prediction that proximity will more often lead to liking than disliking can be derived from a number of the cognitive-consistency theories. It can perhaps be most easily derived from Heider's (1958) balance theory. The basic tenet of Heider's theory is that people strive to make their sentiment relationships harmonious with their perception of the unit relationships existent between objects.

What does Heider mean by the phrase "*sentiment relationships*"? A "sentiment" is simply a positive or negative attitude toward someone or something. What does Heider mean by the phrase "*unit relationships*"? Separate entities are said to have a unit relationship when they are perceived as belonging together. The members of a family, for example, are usually perceived as a unit, as are a person and his clothing, and so on.

Heider draws upon the principles of perceptual organisation which were formulated by the Gestalt psychologists. The Gestaltists discovered that relationship between objects which is especially likely to lead to unit formation is proximity: Objects which are close together spatially tend to be perceived as a unit. According to Heider's theory, then, if one perceives that a unit relationship with another exists (e.g., the other is in close proximity), this perception should induce a harmonious sentiment relationship (e.g., liking).

To test whether or not unit formation produced by interacting intimately with another increases attraction, Darley and Berscheid (1967) led college women to expect that they were going to discuss their sexual standards and behaviour with another girl, ostensibly participating in the same study. After the expectation of further interaction had been induced, each girl was given two folders. One folder was said to contain personality information about her partner, the girl with whom she would converse and exchange information. The other folder was said to contain information about another girl, who would also participate in the study but whom she would never meet.

The personality information contained in both folders was designed to produce as ambiguous a picture as possible of the girl described. Half of the subjects believed that the girl described in folder A was their "randomly selected" discussion partner; the other half believed that the girl described in folder B was their partner.

Subjects were instructed to read through both folders, form a general impression of both girls, and then rate each of them along a number of dimensions, including liking. The results of this study clearly indicated that the subjects expressed more liking for the girl who had been designated as their discussion partner than they did for the girl who was not. This study suggests, that the factor of proximity, may

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produce a feeling of unit formation between two people. This feeling of being in a unit relationship with another may then induce feelings of liking for that person. Knowledge that one will be in close proximity with another may result, then, in an individual's going *into* an interaction situation with increased liking for the other person prior to the actual interaction and prior to actual knowledge of possible rewards which may be obtained in the interaction.

It is interesting that the liking produced by the anticipation of being in close proximity with another may lead a person to voluntarily choose to associate with the other person, even though the original interaction which was anticipated has been cancelled. It was found that even when a subject anticipated interacting with an objectively undesirable person, the attraction induced by the anticipation of close interaction caused subjects to choose voluntarily to interact with that negative person more readily than did people who had not previously anticipated association with that person.

Thus one may summarise this section by stating that actual proximity is probably correlated with attraction (or repulsion) because proximity allows one to obtain an increased amount of information about the other person and to experience rewards or punishments from the other. There is some suggestive evidence that proximity in and of itself, (apart from any information it may provide about another and apart from any rewards or punishments which the other may administer), may facilitate attraction as a by-product of the individual's desire for cognitive consistency.

3.2.3 Similarity

The notion of "birds of a feather flock together" points out that similarity is a crucial determinant of interpersonal attraction. According to Morry's attraction-similarity model (2007), there is a lay belief that people with actual similarity produce initial attraction. Perceived similarity develops for someone to rate others as similar to themselves in ongoing relationship. Such perception is either self serving (friendship) or relationship serving (romantic relationship). Newcomb (1963) pointed out that people tend to change perceived similarity to obtain balance in a relationship. Additionally, perceived similarity was found to be greater than actual similarity in predicting interpersonal attraction.

3.2.3.1 Similarity in Different Aspects

Research suggest that interpersonal similarity and attraction are multidimensional constructs in which people are attracted to others who are similar to them in demographics, physical appearance, attitudes, interpersonal style, social and cultural background, personality, interests and activities preferences, and communication and social skills. A study conducted by Theodore Newcomb (1963) on college dorm roommates suggested that individuals with shared backgrounds, academic achievements, attitudes, values, and political views became friends.

Physical Appearance

Erving Goffman, sociologist suggests that people are more likely to form long standing relationships with those who are equally matched in social attributes, like physical attractiveness etc. The study by researchers Walster and Walster supported the matching hypothesis by showing that partners who were similar in terms of physical attractiveness expressed the most liking for each other. Another study

also found evidence that supported the matching hypothesis: photos of dating and engaged couples were rated in terms of attractiveness, and a definite tendency was found for couples of similar attractiveness to date or engage (Murstein et.al., 1976).

Attitudes

According to the 'law of attraction' by Byrne (1971), attraction towards a person is positively related to the proportion of attitudes similarity associated with that person. It was also raised that the one with similar attitudes as yours was more agreeable with your perception of things and more reinforcing she/he was, so the more you like him/her. Based on the cognitive consistency theories, difference in attitudes and interests can lead to dislike and avoidance (Singh & Ho, 2000) whereas similarity in attitudes promotes social attraction (Singh & Ho, 2000). It was pointed out that attitude similarity activates the perceived attractiveness and favour-ability information from each other, whereas dissimilarity would reduce the impact of these cues.

The studies by Jamieson, Lydon and Zanna (1987) showed that attitude similarity could predict how people evaluate their respect for each other, and social and intellectual first impressions which in terms of activity preference similarity and value-based attitude similarity respectively. In intergroup comparisons, high attitude similarity would lead to homogeneity among in-group members whereas low attitude similarity would lead to diversity among in-group members, promoting social attraction and achieving high group performance in different tasks. Although attitudinal similarity and attraction are linearly related, attraction may not contribute significantly to attitude change (Simons, Berkowitz & Moyer, 1970).

Social and Cultural Background

Byrne, Clore and Worchel (1966) suggested people with similar economic status are likely to be attracted to each other. Buss & Barnes (1986) also found that people prefer their romantic partners to be similar in certain demographic characteristics, including religious background, political orientation and socio-economic status.

Personality

Researchers have shown that interpersonal attraction was positively correlated to personality similarity (Goldman, Rosenzweig & Lutter, 1980). People are inclined to desire romantic partners who are similar to themselves on agreeableness, conscientiousness, extroversion, emotional stability, openness to experience and attachment style (Klohnem & Luo, 2003).

Interests and Activities

Activity similarity was especially predictive of liking judgments, which affects the judgments of attraction (Lydon, Jamieson & Zanna, 1988). Lydon et.al, (1988) claimed that high self-monitoring people were influenced more by activity preference similarity than attitude similarity on initial attraction, while low self-monitoring people were influenced more on initial attraction by value-based attitude similarity than activity preference similarity.

Social Skills

According to the post-conversation measures of social attraction, tactical similarity was positively correlated with partner satisfaction and global competence ratings, but was uncorrelated with the opinion change and perceived persuasiveness measures (Waldron & Applegate, 1998).

3.2.3.2 Effects of Similarity on Interpersonal Attraction

Similarity has effects on starting a relationship by initial attraction to know each other. It is showed that high attitude similarity resulted in a significant increase in initial attraction to the target person and high attitude dissimilarity resulted in a decrease of initial attraction. Similarity also promotes relationship commitment. Study on heterosexual dating couples found that similarity in intrinsic values of the couple was linked to relationship commitment and stability (Kurdek & Schnopp-Wyatt, 1997).

3.2.3.3 Complementarity

The model of complementarity explains whether “birds of a feather flock together” or “opposites attract”. Studies show that complementary interaction between two partners increases their attractiveness to each other. Complementary partners preferred closer interpersonal relationship than non-complementary ones. Couples who reported the highest level of loving and harmonious relationship were more dissimilar in dominance than couples who scored lower in relationship quality. (Markey & Markey (2007)).

Mathes and Moore (1985) found that people were more attracted to peers approximating to their ideal self than to those who did not. Specifically, low self-esteem individuals appeared more likely to desire a complementary relationship than high self-esteem people. We are attracted to people who complement to us because this allows us to maintain our preferred style of behaviour (Markey & Markey (2007)), and through interaction with someone who complements our own behaviour, we are likely to have a sense of self-validation and security.

3.2.3.4 Principles of Similarity or Complementarity

Principles of similarity and complementarity seem to be contradictory on the surface. In fact, they agree on the dimension of warmth. Both principles state that friendly people would prefer friendly partners (Dryer & Horowitz, 1997). The importance of similarity and complementarity may depend on the stage of the relationship. Similarity seems to carry considerable weight in initial attraction, while complementarity assumes importance as the relationship develops over time. Markey (2007) found that people would be more satisfied with their relationship if their partners differed from them, at least, in terms of dominance, as two dominant persons may experience conflicts while two submissive individuals may have frustration as neither member take the initiative. Perception and actual behaviour might not be congruent with each other. There were cases that dominant people perceived their partners to be similarly dominant, yet in the eyes of independent observers, the actual behaviour of their partner was submissive, in other words, complementary to them (Dryer 1997). Why do people perceive their romantic partners to be similar to them despite evidence to the contrary? The reason remains unclear, pending further research.

3.3 EXPLAINING INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION

3.3.1 Social Exchange Theory

People's feelings toward a potential partner are dependent on their perception of rewards and costs, the kind of relationships they deserve, and their likelihood for having a healthier relationship with someone else. Rewards are the part of a relationship that makes it worthwhile and enjoyable. A cost is something that can cause irritation like a friend overstaying his welcome. Comparison level is also taken into account during a relationship. This suggests that people expect rewards or costs depending on the time invested in the relationship. If the level of expected rewards is minimal and the level of costs is high, the relationship suffers and both parties may become dissatisfied and unhappy. Lastly, the comparison of alternatives means that satisfaction is conditional on the chance that a person could replace the relationship with a more desirable one.

3.3.2 Evolutionary Theories

The evolutionary theory of human interpersonal attraction states that opposite-sex attraction most often occurs when someone has physical features indicating that he or she is very fertile. Considering that the primary purpose of conjugal/romantic relationships is reproduction, it would follow that people invest in partners who appear very fertile, increasing the chance of their genes being passed down to the next generation. This theory has been criticised because it does not explain relationships between same-sex couples or couples who do not want children, although this may have something to do with the fact that whether one wants children or not one is still subject to the evolutionary forces which produce them.

Another evolutionary explanation suggests that fertility in a mate is of greater importance to men than to women. According to this theory, a woman places significant emphasis on a man's ability to provide resources and protection. The theory suggests that these resources and protection are important in ensuring the successful raising of the woman's offspring. The ability to provide resources and protection might also be sought because the underlying traits are likely to be passed on to male offspring.

Evolutionary theory also suggests that people whose physical features suggest they are healthy are seen as more attractive. The theory suggests that a healthy mate is more likely to possess genetic traits related to health that would be passed on to offspring. People's tendency to consider people with facial symmetry more attractive than those with less symmetrical faces is one example. However, a test was conducted that found that perfectly symmetrical faces were less attractive than normal faces. It has also been suggested that people are attracted to faces similar to their own. Case studies have revealed that when a photograph of a woman was superimposed to include the features of a man's face, the man whose face was superimposed almost always rated that picture the most attractive. This theory is based upon the notion that we want to replicate our own features in the next generation, as we have survived thus far with such features and have instinctive survival wishes for our children. Another (non-evolutionary) explanation given for the results of that study was that the man whose face was superimposed may have consciously or subconsciously associated the photographically altered female face with the face of his mother or other family member.

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Evolutionary theory also suggests that love keeps two people together so that they can raise a child. Love keeps two people together, and this would help raise a child. For example, a man and a woman who love each other would be together and work together to raise a child. Back in the tribal days—when much of human evolution took place—it would probably require two people to successfully raise an offspring, and a mother with a supporting partner would probably have more surviving offspring than a mother who does not have such a partner. Thus, people with the ability to form love would produce more offspring than those without that ability. And these offspring would have the genes for love. Thus, the genes for love would become common, and that is why most people today have the ability to love.

3.3.3 The Reciprocity-of-Liking Rule

A naive observer from another culture would have little trouble discovering one reward which people in our society spend a tremendous amount of time, money, and effort to obtain. Just a brief glance at a few television commercials would reveal that the desire for the esteem of others must be a very strong and pervasive motivation, for it is often exploited by those who have something to sell. Countless everyday observations provide a great deal of evidence that we value highly the esteem of others and will work hard to obtain this reward. If esteem is indeed a reward, and if it is true that we tend to like those who reward us, it follows that we should like people who like us.

The proposition that esteem will be reciprocated can be derived from several psychological theories. Theorists who take the reinforcement point of view reason that the most general determinants of interpersonal esteem are reciprocal rewards and punishments. Some of these theorists (e.g., Homans, 1961) have specifically noted that one type of reward to which people are extremely responsive is social approval or esteem. Like money, social approval is viewed as a generalised, “transituational” reinforcer because it has the power to reinforce a wide variety of human activities. For example, many experimenters have demonstrated that if one merely nods his head and murmurs approval each time his discussion partner utters a plural noun, he can dramatically increase the frequency with which the recipient of that reward will pepper his discourse with plural nouns (e.g., Dulany, 1961). Stronger demonstrations of approval, such as the roar of the crowd or another’s love for oneself, frequently influence lifetimes of activity. Social approval, again like money, is valuable because its possession makes one reasonably confident that a number of his needs will be satisfied; a lack of social approval often indicates that many of one’s needs— those which require the good will and cooperation of others for satisfaction— will be frustrated.

In addition to the reinforcement theorists, cognitive-consistency theorists also make the reciprocal-liking prediction. Heider’s balance theory (1958), for example, predicts that if Person A likes X (himself) and Person B likes X (Person A), a cognitively balanced state in which Person A likes Person B will be induced. Many correlational data, obtained from a wide variety of psychological studies, have been cited in support of the reciprocal-liking proposition (e.g., Newcomb, 1963). These data provide evidence that individuals tend to believe that the people they like reciprocate their liking. If it is true that we like people who like us, we would expect to find such a correlation. Taken alone, however, these data do not provide conclusive evidence for reciprocity of liking. Either one of two processes, or both, could be responsible for the observed correlation between the extent to which we feel another likes us and the extent to which we like him.

- 1) A person may come to like another and *then*, as a consequence of his liking, come to perceive that the other person likes him. In such a case, the liking for the other is not induced by the other person's providing the reward of esteem, but rather by some other determinant of interpersonal attraction.
- 2) One may become attracted to another as a consequence of his discovery that the other person likes him. Such a process would support the notion that esteem constitutes a reward, and we are attracted to people who give such a reward.

3.3.4 Rewarding Reduces Anxiety, Stress, Loneliness and Enhances Self-Esteem

As a strategy of interpersonal attraction if one person in the interaction rewards the other for something the latter has done, it enhances the interpersonal relationship. In the process it also reduces many of the negative emotional states of the person concerned. This is being discussed in detail below:

3.3.4.1 Liking Produced By Rewards Others Provide

The psychological principle which is most frequently used to predict interpersonal attraction is the principle of reinforcement. We will like those who reward us, we will dislike those who punish us. Several theorists have elaborated upon the relationship between reinforcement and interpersonal attraction. For example, Homans' (1961) theory rests largely on the general proposition that a necessary condition for receiving esteem from others is the capacity to reward them. He hypothesizes further that

A man's esteem depends upon the relative rarity of the services he provides if we take a larger look at the ways in which a man may help others. If he has capacities of heart, mind, skill, experience, or even strength that they do not have, and uses these capacities to reward others, he will get esteem from them. But if his capacities are of a kind that they also possess, or if these capacities are widely available in the group, he will not get much esteem even if he uses them in such a way as to reward the others.

In other words, there are, according to Homans, rewards and rewards—one who provides rewards which are in short supply is more likely to evoke attraction than one who provides rewards which are relatively common. Homans considers the costs as well as the rewards one can incur in a relationship and introduces the concept of profit. Profit is simply defined as the amount of reward a person receives from an interaction minus the cost he incurs in that interaction. The amount of social approval, or esteem, one has for another is hypothesised to be a function of the profit one obtains from one's interactions with the other.

According to these theorists, then, how much a person will be attracted to another depends upon whether the outcomes the person obtains from the other are above or below his Comparison Level (CL) "If the outcomes in a given relationship surpass the CL, that relationship is regarded as a satisfactory one. And, to the degree the outcomes are supra-CL, the person may be said to be attracted to the relationship. If the outcomes endured are infra-CL, the person is dissatisfied and unhappy with the relationship".

Lott and Lott (1961), extending Hullian learning theory to apply to the case of interpersonal attraction, have reasoned that a person should come to like not only

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those who provide rewards, but also those who have nothing to do with providing rewards, but are merely physically present when the individual receives rewards. They have reasoned that, like any other response, response to a reward becomes conditioned to all discriminable stimuli present at the time of reinforcement; another person, of course, may be a discriminable stimulus.

To test whether or not one tends to like those who just happen to be present at the time one receives a reward, Lott and Lott formed three-member groups of children. Each group then played a game in which some members of the group were rewarded and other members were not. Following participation in the game sociometric tests were administered to the children. Specifically the children were asked which two children in the class they would choose to take with them on their next family vacation. The results of some studies indicated that children who had been rewarded chose members of their three-person groups (who were present at the time of reward) significantly more often than unrewarded children chose members of their three-person groups.

Thus, Lott and Lott concluded that the reward of success in the game had been conditioned to the other members of the group and this led to increased esteem for these members. Results of this study were corroborated by a subsequent study conducted by James and Lott (1964). While it is generally accepted that “we will like those who reward us and dislike those who punish us,” we must note that this statement does not, to any great extent, increase predictability in the area of interpersonal attraction. We have no equation which will permit us to add up all the rewards a stimulus person will provide and balance them against the punishment which he will inflict and thus arrive at a total reward index which will tell us how much others will like him.

A multitude of things may be rewarding or punishing to any individual at a given time. In addition, it is often the case that “one man’s meat is another man’s poison”; individuals differ in what they find to be rewarding or punishing. Since it is so difficult to calculate what one individual at one point in time will find rewarding, researchers in interpersonal attraction have been led to consider which behaviours and events most people, most of the time, will find rewarding. By considering some of the specific behaviours that have been found to be rewarding or punishing to people in a number of different situations, that is behaviours which appear to be “trans-situational reinforcers, some predictive insight into interpersonal attraction has been gained.

3.3.4.2 Anxiety

There is much evidence that when individuals feel anxious, afraid, lonely or unsure of themselves, the sheer presence of others is particularly rewarding. Try an experiment: Come to class a few minutes early on a regular school day. You will probably find that few of your classmates approach you. Then, some time when an exam is scheduled in one of your classes, arrive a few minutes early. You may be surprised to see the number of classmates who approach you with friendly remarks or joking comments. There is a good psychological explanation for the observation that students seem friendlier on days when an exam is scheduled than on days when one is not.

Schachter (1959) tested the hypothesis that anxiety conditions will lead to an increased affiliative tendency. He recruited college women to participate in an experiment. When they arrived in the experimental rooms, the experimenter claimed

that his investigation was concerned with the effects of electric shock. The description of the shock experiment was designed to make some of the women highly anxious, while leaving the remainder of the women calm. Specifically, anxiety was produced in the following way:

In the high-anxiety condition, the subjects entered a room to find facing them a gentleman of serious mien, wearing hornrimmed glasses, dressed in a white laboratory coat, stethoscope dribbling out of his pocket, behind him an array of formidable electrical junk. After a few preliminaries, the experimenter began: "Allow me to introduce myself. I am Dr. Gregor Zilstein of the Medical School's Departments of Neurology and Psychiatry. I have asked you all to come today in order to serve as subjects in an experiment concerned with the effects of electrical shock".

To make matters worse, the series of electric shocks the girls were to receive were described as extremely painful. In the low-anxiety condition, both the setting and the description of the experiment were designed to avoid arousing anxiety in the subjects. There was no electrical apparatus in the experimental room. The experimenter explained that he was concerned with extremely mild electrical shocks that would not in any way be painful. The "shocks" were said to resemble more a tickle or a tingle than anything unpleasant.

Once some women had been made more anxious than others, Schachter could examine how anxiety affected their desire to be with other individuals. He assessed subjects' desire to affiliate in the following way. The experimenter claimed that there would be about a ten-minute delay while several pieces of equipment were secured. Subjects were told that during the ten-minute break they could wait in a private cubicle. These rooms were said to be comfortable and spacious; they all contained armchairs and there were books and magazines in each room. The experimenter also commented that some of them might want to wait with other girls. If they preferred to wait with others, they were asked to let the experimenter know. He then passed out a sheet upon which the subject could indicate whether she preferred to wait alone, or with others, or had no preference at all. Schachter found support for his hypothesis that anxious people will be especially inclined to seek the company of others. Sixty-three per cent of the subjects in the high-anxiety condition wanted to wait with other subjects. In the low-anxiety condition only thirty-three per cent of subjects wished to wait with others. Schachter had also asked girls to indicate how *strongly* they desired to be alone or with others. They could give answers varying from "I very much prefer being alone" (scored -2) through "I don't care very much" (0) to "I very much prefer being together with others" (scored +2). These data also support the notion that affiliative desire increases with anxiety.

The finding that the anticipation of stress produces an increased desire to affiliate has been replicated by Darley and Aronson (1966). While anxiety appears to increase an individual's need for affiliation, there is evidence that anxious individuals are selective about the others with whom they wish to affiliate. Anxious people apparently do not wish to be in the company of just any other person. Instead, anxious individuals seem to prefer to associate with people who are in a situation similar to their own.

Schachter bases this conclusion on a study which is similar in many ways to the experiment just described. Two groups of college women were led to anticipate that they would soon be severely shocked. Then they were asked whether they

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preferred to wait alone or with others. How the “others” were described varied. In one condition girls were given a choice between waiting alone or waiting with some girls who were said to be taking part in the same experiment. In the other condition, girls were told they could either wait alone or with girls who were waiting to talk to their professors and advisors. Sixty per cent of the girls who had a chance to visit with similar others chose to spend their time in the company of others. Not one girl who was given the option of waiting with girls who were waiting to talk with their professors chose to wait with others. Scores on the “Over-all Intensity Scale” revealed the same results. Girls did not seem to be especially anxious to associate with other girls unless these other girls were in a situation similar to their own. Schachter notes that this finding puts a limitation on the old saw “Misery loves company.” Perhaps misery doesn’t love just any kind of company - only miserable company. Once we accept the proposition that when individuals are anxious they have a special desire to affiliate with people in situations similar to their own, the question arises as to why this would be so. Schachter considers several possibilities:

- 1) *Escape*. When one is in a stressful situation, perhaps he anticipates that talking to others in the same situation may help him figure out a way to avoid the pain altogether.
- 2) *Cognitive clarity*. There is some evidence that individuals in ambiguous or novel situations will desire to talk with knowledgeable others in order to gain some understanding of an otherwise incomprehensible event. Since receiving severe shock in an experimental setting is probably unique in the subject’s experience, perhaps anxious subjects desire to associate with others in order to find out if the others know any more about what is going on than they do.
- 3) *Direct anxiety reduction*. People often comfort and reassure one another. Perhaps highly anxious subjects choose to wait with others in the hope that the others will bolster their courage.
- 4) *Indirect anxiety reduction*. An effective device for reducing anxiety is to “get one’s mind off one’s troubles.” People may be seen as more diverting than books or magazines. Perhaps subjects choose to wait with others in order to prevent themselves from thinking about the shock which will be forthcoming.
- 5) *Self-evaluation*. People often use other people in order to evaluate the reasonableness of their own emotions and feelings. In this novel and emotion-producing situation, an individual probably is not quite sure exactly how she should be reacting. (Should she be angry at the experimenter? Slightly apprehensive about the shock? Terrified?) Perhaps high-anxiety subjects seek out others in an attempt to appropriately label and identify their own feelings.

3.3.4.3 Stress

There is some evidence that individuals who are placed in a stressful situation show less severe physiological disturbance if other individuals are present than if they are not. Bovard (1959) developed an intriguing and compelling theory concerning the effect of social stimuli on an individual’s physiological response to stress.

A number of recent studies have suggested a reciprocal inhibitory effect between the posterior hypothalamus and the anterior hypothalamus and parasympathetic

centers . . . Stimulation of the latter region would appear to inhibit activity of the former . . .

The simplest hypothesis to account for the observed phenomena at the human and animal levels is, therefore, that the presence of another member of the same species stimulates activity of the anterior hypothalamus and thus, as a byproduct, inhibits activity of the posterior hypothalamus and its centers mediating the neuroendocrine response to stress. Previous interaction with the other person or animal, as the case may be, could be assumed to accentuate this effect.

The evidence that the presence of others may help eliminate an individual's discomfort when he is experiencing stress, provides an additional reason why individuals might learn to affiliate with others in stressful circumstances.

3.3.4.4 Social Isolation

There is evidence that even when not under stressful conditions, people prefer a fair amount of contact with others to being alone for any length of time. The strength of the desire for social intercourse with others was dramatically demonstrated by the results of a social reform experiment conducted in the early 19th century. At this time one of the great prison architects was John Haviland. As the result of the Quakers' religious beliefs and the upsurge of "humanitarianism," an attempt was made in 1821 to reform the prison system. Haviland was commissioned to build a "perfect" and "humanitarian" prison. The Quaker reformers noticed that mingling among prison inmates produced strong friendships among the inmates which caused them to continue their friendships after being released. Such friendships among ex-criminals tended to lead ex-criminals back into a life of crime. In the humanitarian reformation, it was decided to prevent contact among the prisoners. It was thought that total social isolation would prevent harmful corruption, protect the criminal's good resolutions, and give him ample opportunity to ponder on his mistakes and make his peace with God. Haviland's architectural design, which provided for solitary confinement day and night, was extremely popular with prison commissioners and a great many prisons imitated this style. The wardens, however, soon found that great ingenuity had to be adopted to prevent prisoners from talking. For example, new ventilation systems had to be designed, for prisoners soon found that the regular systems could be utilised for purposes of communication. Ultimately the policy of social isolation was found to produce undesirable results. The fact that many inmates became physically and mentally ill as a result of their solitary confinement and their lack of work eventually forced a change of policy. Current psychological knowledge would have enabled us to foresee this outcome. By early childhood a person has usually developed a need for the company of people. Complete social isolation for any prolonged period of time is known to be a painful experience. "Cabin fever" is a familiar expression which epitomizes the discomfort that even brief social isolation brings. Schachter points out that the autobiographical reports of religious hermits, prisoners of war, make it clear that isolation is devastating.

He notes that three trends have been found to characterise the experience of individuals enduring absolute social deprivation.

- 1) The reported pain of the isolation experience seems typically to bear a nonmonotonic relationship to time. Pain increases to a maximum in many cases and then decreases sharply. This decrease in pain is frequently marked by onset of the state of apathy, sometimes so severe as to resemble a schizophrenic state

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of withdrawal and detachment.

- 2) There seems to be a stronger tendency for those in isolation to think, dream, and occasionally to hallucinate about people.
- 3) Those isolates who are able to keep themselves occupied with distracting activities appear to suffer less and to be less prone to develop apathy.

The data support the conclusion that complete social isolation is more unpleasant than normal human contact. It is evident that others provide some reward by their sheer physical presence, they stave off loneliness.

3.3.4.5 Self Esteem

What effect does an individual's self-esteem have on his reaction to accepting or rejecting others? Clinicians seem to agree that a high self-esteem person is more receptive to another's love than is an individual with lower self-esteem. For example, Rogers (1951) says that the person who accepts himself will have better interpersonal relations with others. Adler (1926) adds that those who themselves feel inferior depreciate others. Horney (1939) views love as a capacity, she sees love of self and love of others as positively related. Fromm (1939), too, agrees with this notion. Studies supporting a positive relationship between self-esteem and liking or acceptance for others are reported in Omwake (1954). These studies support the contention that there is a positive relationship between self-esteem and liking.

A different prediction was made by Dittes (1959). He hypothesised that approval from other people would be especially rewarding to individuals low in self-esteem. He argued that:

A person's attraction towards membership in a group, like motivational attraction toward any object, may be considered a function of two interacting determinants: (a) the extent to which his particular needs are satisfied by the group, and (b) the strength of his needs.

Dittes assumed that the lower the level of one's own self-esteem, the greater would be his need for such supports to self-esteem as are provided by acceptance in a group. From this assumption, Dittes' predictions can be clearly derived: (1) When another person is accepting, he satisfies a greater need in a low self-esteem person than in a high self-esteem person. Thus, acceptance should produce a greater increase in attraction the lower the self-esteem of the recipient. (2) When the other person is rejecting, he frustrates a greater need in the low self-esteem person than in the high self-esteem person. Thus rejection should decrease the other's attractiveness more, the lower the self-esteem of the recipient.

An experimental study provided support for Dittes' proposal. Subjects were college freshmen, who met in small groups of five or six members for a two-hour discussion task session. An attempt was made to make the group very attractive. During the first hour of discussion, the groups' conversation was interrupted three times to allow subjects to rate the desirability of having each of the other members in the group. These ratings were requested by the experimenter as though they were for his own interest. At an intermission, the subject's interest in these ratings was aroused and he was allowed to see privately what he believed to be the ratings of desirability made of him by other members of the group. Actually, the

distributed ratings were fictitious, and had been prepared in advance to lead some subjects (those in the Satisfying condition) to believe that they were highly accepted by the group, and to lead others (those in the Frustrating condition) to believe that the group rejected them. After some additional tasks had been performed, the subject's own attraction to the group was assessed. Individuals were asked if the group met again, how much they would like to continue working with it, how much they enjoyed participating in the experiment, and how disappointed would they be if not invited back to participate. Scores on these questions were summed to form an index of the subject's attraction to the group.

Dittes measured self-esteem in three ways: (1) Before the experimental session, subjects completed a self-esteem questionnaire. (2) At the end of the session, they were asked about their general sense of adequacy among groups of peers. (Since the acceptance manipulation would be expected to affect answers to this question, subjects' scores were computed separately in each experimental condition.) (3) Subjects were rated by the other individuals in the group. The ratings they received were considered to be indicative of their own self-esteem. The extent to which the subject believed he had been accepted by the group had a much greater effect on whether or not he reciprocated the group's liking when his self-esteem was low than when it was high.

3.4 LET US SUM UP

Both personal characteristics and environment play a role in interpersonal attraction. A major determinant of attraction is propinquity, or physical proximity. People who come into contact regularly and have no prior negative feelings about each other generally become attracted to each other as their degree of mutual familiarity and comfort level increases. The situation in which people first meet also determines how they will feel about each other. One is more likely to feel friendly toward a person first encountered in pleasant, comfortable circumstances. People are generally drawn to each other when they perceive similarities with each other. The more attitudes and opinions two people share, the greater the probability that they will like each other. It has also been shown that disagreement on important issues decreases attraction. One of the most important shared attitudes is that liking and disliking the same people creates an especially strong bond between two individuals. The connection between interpersonal attraction and similar attitudes is complex because once two people become friends, they begin to influence each other's attitudes. In conclusion, people tend to be attracted to individuals who are physically attractive, physically accessible and socially available; and similar in terms of purposes, backgrounds, beliefs, and needs. However, interpersonal attraction is not the only factor that affects the building of a strong and health relationship. A good relationship requires communication and the ability to adapt to one another.

3.5 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Define the term interpersonal attraction and discuss its significance in our life.
- 2) Describe the salient factors that contribute in the development of interpersonal attraction
- 3) Why do people attracted towards others as they do, critically evaluate.

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UNIT 4 AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE

Structure

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Process of Social Influence**4.6 Intervention to Reduce Aggression**

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4.7 Let Us Sum Up**4.8 Unit End Questions****4.9 Suggested Readings and References**

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Human aggression is any behaviour directed toward another individual that is carried out with the proximate (immediate) intent to cause harm. In addition, the perpetrator must believe that the behaviour will harm the target, and that the target is motivated to avoid the behaviour (Bushman & Anderson 2001, Baron & Richardson 1994, Berkowitz 1993, Geen 2001).

Aggression is the delivery of an aversive stimulus from one person to another, with intent to harm and with an expectation of causing such harm, when the other person is motivated to escape or avoid the stimulus.

When we hear the word ‘aggression’ we probably tend first to think of physical force - a fist-fight, an assault with a weapon, a loud verbal retort or some other form of intense and punitive action enacted in the course of conflict between two people. Actually, according to the definition we have adopted, aggression may be carried out in any behaviour actuated by intent to harm another person against that person’s wishes. Spreading vicious gossip about someone in hopes of ruining that person’s reputation would be considered aggression.

In this unit we will be dealing with nature and type of aggression, and learn how to measure aggression. Following this we will learn about causes of aggression from various perspectives including biologic, neurophysiologic and social perspective. Whether aggressive behaviour is in any way related to parental rearing style and the influence of parental attitudes on children. Also there will be environmental stressors and the unit will take up all the theories of aggression. Finally the unit will talk about the interventions to prevent aggression.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

After successful completion of this Unit, you will be able to:

- 1 Define aggression;
- 1 Differentiate between various types of aggression;
- 1 Analyse the various causes of aggression;

- 1 Explain aggression in the light of different theories; and
- 1 Explain effective techniques to reduce aggression.

4.2 NATURE AND TYPES OF AGGRESSION

Apart from physical violence against the body of other humans, there may also be verbal abuse and verbal assault etc., which all can be considered as aggression. In addition, damaging or destroying another's property can be a highly effective way of aggressing against another person. Even something as subtle and controlled as a social snub can be a powerful source of harm to the victim, a harm that is clearly intended by the person delivering it. Accidental harm is not aggressive because it is not intended. Harm that is an incidental by-product of helpful actions is also not aggressive, because the harm-doer believes that the target is not motivated to avoid the action (e.g., pain experienced during a dental procedure). Similarly, the pain administered in sexual masochism is not aggressive because the victim is not motivated to avoid it. Indeed, the pain is actively solicited in service of a higher goal (Baumeister 1989).

Aggressive behaviour during early childhood is considered a part of the normal developmental process (Greydanus, Pratt, Greydanus, & Hoffman, 1992). Acts of aggression change during a person's life span. When young children lack verbal skills, aggression is predominantly physical. When verbal skills develop, they could be used as peaceful communication, but also for aggressive purposes (Ferris & Grisso, 1996). Outbursts of anger usually peak around 18 to 24 months of age and gradually decrease by five years of age. Tremblay et al. (1999), found that most children have experienced their onset of physical aggression by the end of their 2nd year. Early aggressive behaviour consists of crying, screaming, temper tantrums, biting, kicking, throwing, and breaking objects (Achenbach, 1994; Raine, Reynolds, Venables, Mednick, & Farrington, 1998). At this stage, intention is instrumental.

Early childhood aggressive behaviour may be in response to parental authority and unrealistic expectations on the part of the parent toward their child. Later as social interactions increase, aggression may be directed towards peers (Greydanus et al., 1992). Later on, such behaviours as teasing, bullying, fighting, irritability, cruelty to animals, and fire-setting occur. During early adolescence, more serious violence develops, including gang fights and use of weapons.

In human research, a widely used definition of aggression is behaviour deliberately aimed at harming people and/or objects. In this definition harm has implicitly been defined as hurting someone physically, e. g. by kicking. However, other forms of harm, like psychological harm, e. g. humiliating, and relational harm such as malicious gossiping, are just as important. In addition to physical aggression, two other forms of aggression are currently recognised, namely psychological aggression and relational aggression.

Antisocial behaviour is defined as behaviour by which people are disadvantaged and basic norms and values are violated. Examples of such behaviours are lying, stealing and truancy. Aggressive behaviour then is a specific form of antisocial behaviour. Aggressive behaviour is an important component of several common mental health disorders in young people, including conduct disorder, oppositional-defiant disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and intermittent explosive disorder.

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Effective treatment of aggression is important not only because this behaviour is associated with negative developmental outcomes for perpetrators but also because it harms people in addition to the client

There are different types of aggression. Theoretical perspectives on aggression suggest that typographically and functionally distinct subtypes of aggression exist (Dodge & Schwartz, 1997). It is important to consider the multidimensional nature of aggression because different stimuli combine with different types of physiological and mental processes to create distinct forms of aggression. Although different classification systems for aggression have been proposed, as seen below, these typologies tend to overlap somewhat, with each system having a slightly different emphasis. The forms of types of aggression that are reviewed consist of the clinical classification, the stimulus-based classification, the instrumental versus hostile classification, and the positive versus negative classification.

4.2.1 Clinical Classification

The clinical literature research, heavily influenced by the work of Feshbach (1970) has frequently referred to two forms of aggression the first form being “affective,” “reactive,” “defensive,” “impulsive,” or “hot-blooded” aggression. This type of aggression is defined as a violent response to physical or verbal aggression initiated by others that is relatively uncontrolled and emotionally charged. In contrast, the second form of aggression is referred to as “predatory,” “instrumental,” “proactive,” or “cold-blooded” aggression. This type of aggression is characterised as controlled, purposeful aggression lacking in emotion that is used to achieve a desired goal, including the domination and control of others.

4.2.2 Instrumental versus Hostile Aggression

Feshbach (1970) originally developed this typology, and it has been elaborated upon more recently by Atkins et al. (1993). This influential model separates aggression into instrumental and hostile functions. Instrumental aggression produces some positive reward or advantage (impact) on the aggressor unrelated to the victim’s discomfort. The purpose of hostile aggression is to induce injury or pain (negative impact) upon the victim. In this case, there is little or no advantage to the aggressor. This model has been widely studied in community samples of children and adults with varying results (Atkins et al., 1993). One problem with this classification is that the constructs require careful delineation because many aggressive episodes will have components of both instrumental and hostile aggression.

4.2.3 Proactive and Reactive Aggression

A number of recent studies of aggression draw a distinction between reactive and proactive aggression. The first of these terms refers to aggressive behaviour that is enacted in response to provocation, such as an attack or an insult, and it is manifested in both self-defensive and angry actions. The latter term refers to aggression that is initiated without apparent provocation, such as we see in bullying behaviour. Such behaviour is not evoked by anger, hostility or the need to defend oneself, but by other motives that relate to obtaining goods, asserting power, assuring the approval of reference groups and other such goals. Reactive and proactive aggression are the equivalent of what earlier theorists called affective and instrumental aggression.

4.2.4 Positive versus Negative Aggression

Generally speaking, aggression is considered to have a negative function that not only elicits disapproval from others, but also is evaluated as destructive and damaging in its consequences. However, Blustein (1996) argues that the term “aggressive” behaviour is ambiguous, denoting both positive and negative behaviours. Ellis (1976) considered positive aggression to be healthy, productive behaviour if it promoted the basic values of survival, protection, happiness, social acceptance, preservation, and intimate relations. In the context of positive aggression, a certain amount of aggression is thought to be necessary and adaptive throughout childhood and adolescence because it helps build autonomy and identity (Gupta, 1983; Romi & Itskowitz, 1990).

Furthermore, a certain degree of aggression or dominance helps to facilitate engagement in cooperative and competitive activities with one’s peers. Channeled in the proper direction, human aggression is the force that enables a person to be healthfully self-assertive, dominant, and independent and to achieve mastery of both the environment and the self. Therefore, it is believed that positive aggression takes many forms, including self-protection, standing up in the face of negation, pushing for new possibilities, and defending against harm.

With respect to negative aggression, this behaviour has been defined as acts that result in personal injury or destruction of property (Bandura, 1973). Alternatively, it also has been defined as attacking behaviour that harms another of the same species (Atkins et al., 1993). Negative aggression also is defined as forceful action that is directed towards the goal of harming or injuring another living being (Moyer, 1968).

Encroaching on the home or territory of a resident and causing others financial, physical, and emotional damage also is included in negative aggression (Moyer, 1968). Negative aggression is considered unhealthy because it induces heightened emotions that can in the long-term be damaging to the individual.

4.3 THE MEASUREMENT OF AGGRESSION

Aggression has been measured in a number of different ways. Perhaps the most popular technique has been to use rating scales that are completed by either the mother of the child or the schoolteacher. One well-used example of such a rating scale is the Child Behaviour Checklist (Achenbach, 1994). A second frequently used measure of aggression consists of self-report measures where the individual fills out a questionnaire to assess different aggressive attitudes and behaviours. Perhaps the most popular is the Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory (Buss & Durkee, 1957).

Aggression also can be measured by observers. For example, the Overt Aggression Scale (Yudofsky, 1986) measures four different types of ward behaviour in psychiatric patients by nurse raters. Furthermore, aggression can be measured using a subtype scale that can classify different types of aggression. Proactive and reactive aggression can be reliably and validly assessed by a brief self-report measure (the Reactive-Proactive Aggression Questionnaire) with a reading age of eight years.

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In addition, aggression and aggressive-related measures can be assessed in the justice system by using

- 1) official files of the police, court, and correctional agencies
- 2) self-report measures, for example Self-Reported Delinquency
- 3) Psychopathy Checklist Revised (PCL-R), a rating scale designed to measure traits of psychopathic personality disorder (Hare, 1991).

PCL-R is the most popular clinical instrument for assessing psychopathic behaviour. Finally, aggression may be assessed using clinical projective tests such as the Thematic Apperception Test (Murray, 1957; Wodrich & Thull, 1997).

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Discuss nature and types of aggression with suitable examples.

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- 2) What are the clinical classification of aggression?

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- 3) Differentiate between proactive and reactive aggression.

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- 4) Define instrumental aggression and differentiate it from hostile aggression.

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- 5) Explain proactive and reactive aggression.

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6) What are the characteristic features of positive and negative aggression.

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7) Describe the methods by which aggression can be measured.

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4.4 CAUSES OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

4.4.1 Neurophysiologic Perspectives

Neurophysiologic perspectives argue that aggression is a biological response that is under the control of the brain. There are several important principles, It emphasises the role of the brain, hormones and neurotransmitters in aggressive behaviour; It stresses that our behaviour is largely governed by biological forces rather than environmental ones; It states that aggression is innate not learned.

4.4.2 Biological Causes

Research is beginning to indicate that biological processes (internal stimuli) may serve a role in predisposing to aggression. Five specific processes are selected for brief description: (1) brain dysfunction, (2) testosterone, (3) serotonin, (4) birth complications, and (5) nutrition deficiency.

4.4.2.1 Brain Dysfunction

Aggressive criminals have been found to have poor brain functioning. One source of evidence comes from neuropsychological tests, which have indicated poor functioning of the frontal and temporal regions of the brain in violent offenders. In addition, EEG studies have shown that aggressive prisoners are more likely to show EEG abnormalities.

Aggressive psychopaths are more likely to show excessive slow EEG wave. A third source of evidence comes from brain imaging studies. Aggressive prisoners have been shown to have reduced glucose metabolism in the prefrontal region of the brain, while individuals with antisocial personality disorder show an 11% reduction in the volume of prefrontal gray matter compared to normal and psychiatric control groups. The reason why brain dysfunction predisposes to aggression may be because the prefrontal region of the brain normally acts to control and regulate the emotional reactions generated by deeper, limbic brain structures like the amygdala. If the prefrontal region of the brain is functioning poorly, it will be less able to keep these aggressive impulses in check, resulting in an increased likelihood of impulsive, aggressive acts.

4.4.2.2 Testosterone

Sex hormones appear to play a role in shaping aggressive behaviour. Aggressive, violent offenders have been found to have significantly higher levels of testosterone than controls. Female criminals also have been found to be much more likely to commit crimes around the menstrual phase of their cycle when progesterone is low, while aggression is reduced around the time of ovulation when estrogen and progesterone levels are high (Carlson, 1998). Weight-lifters who take anabolic steroids become more aggressive and hostile, and normal men who are given testosterone become more irritable and hostile.

4.4.2.3 Serotonin

There has been a recent increase in research on neurotransmitters and their relationship to aggression in animals and humans. Although there is emerging data implicating the role of a variety of neurotransmitters in mediating impulsive aggressive behaviour in humans, most data have suggested a particularly strong role for serotonin. Both animal and human research has shown that aggressors have lower levels of the neurotransmitter serotonin. Nevertheless, the links between brain chemistry and aggression in humans are complex, because the environment plays a key role in regulating neurochemistry.

Social dominance influences serotonin levels in monkeys, and alcohol consumption also plays a significant role (Carlson, 1998). Birth complications have been repeatedly found to be associated with later increased aggressive behaviour in childhood and criminal activity in adults. Interestingly, birth complications alone have rarely been found to have a direct link with aggression and violence. Instead, aggressive behaviour is especially likely to develop when birth complications combine with psychosocial risk factors such as disadvantaged family environment, and poor parenting (Arsenault, Tremblay, Boulerice, & Saucier, 2002). Specific birth complications e.g., forceps delivery etc. are believed to result in central nervous system damage, which in turn impairs brain function, which then predisposes aggression (Liu, 2004a).

4.4.2.4 Nutrition Deficiency

Research on nutrition deficiency and aggressive behaviour is beginning to get attention. Factors include food additives, hypoglycemia, cholesterol, and deficiencies in protein, iron, and zinc. In humans, the male offspring of pregnant women starved during the German blockade of food to Holland at the end of World War II had 2.5 times the rates of antisocial personality disorder in adulthood compared to controls. In addition, several studies reported that iron deficiency is directly associated with aggressive behaviour and conduct disorder. Similarly, zinc deficiency has been found to be linked with aggressive behaviour in both animals and humans. It is believed that early malnutrition negatively impacts brain growth and development, and that brain impairments predispose individuals to antisocial and violent behaviour by impacting cognitive functions (Liu, Raine, Venables, & Mednick, 2004).

4.4.3 Environment and Genes

Twin and adoption studies suggest a large shared (family) environmental effect, a moderate non-shared (unique) environmental effect, and a modest genetic effect. Typical twin concordance rates for adolescent delinquency are 87% for

monozygotic twins and 72% for dizygotic twins. Adoption studies suggest that genetically vulnerable children—that is, children whose birth parents were antisocial—may be especially susceptible to unfavourable family conditions. The genetic element seems to be stronger for adult criminality than childhood conduct disorder and delinquency.

4.4.4 Parental Rearing Style

Five aspects of how parents bring up their children have been shown repeatedly to be strongly associated with long term antisocial behaviour problems, namely (a) poor supervision, (b) erratic, harsh discipline, (c) parental disharmony, (d) rejection of the child, and (e) low involvement in the child's activities. One study showed that among antisocial boys aged 10, differences in parenting styles predicted over 30 % of the variance in aggression two years later.

4.4.5 Parent-child Interaction Pattern

Direct observation in the home shows that much aggressive behaviour in children is influenced by the way parents behave towards them. In many families with antisocial children the parents do little to encourage polite or considerate behaviour by the child. Such behaviour is often ignored and rendered ineffective. Yet frequently when the child yells or has a tantrum he or she gets attention, often the parent gives in, so the child wins and soon learns to adapt accordingly. The coexistent unresponsiveness to the child's communications and emotional needs contributes further to the child's disturbance.

4.4.6 Parental Influence on Children's Emotions and Attitudes

Difficulties can often be traced back to infancy. A high proportion of toddlers who go on to develop conduct problems show disorganised attachment patterns, experiencing fear, anger, and distress on reunion with their parent after a brief separation. This behaviour is likely to be a response to frightening, unavailable, and inconsistent parenting. The security of infant attachment can be predicted with substantial certainty before the child is even born, from the emotionally distorted, confused style in which the mother talks about relationships with her own parents.

By middle childhood, aggressive children are quick to construe neutral overtures by others as hostile and have difficulty judging other people's feelings. They are poor at generating constructive solutions to conflicts, believing instead that aggression will be effective. This quickness to take offence at the slightest opportunity is reflected on the street in sensitivity to disrespect, which can lead to swift retribution. This indicates the fragile self esteem and confrontational view of the world that these young people have come to develop after experiencing years of frustration and failure. Some find that being violent makes them feel good about themselves and give them control.

4.4.7 Difficulties with Friends and at School

In the school playground these children lack the skills to participate and take turns without upsetting others and becoming aggressive. Peer rejection typically ensues quickly, and the children then associate with the other antisocial children, who share their set of values. Those with difficulty reading typically fail to get any qualifications by the time they leave school, and they become unemployed. This may contribute to persisting aggressive behaviour.

4.4.8 Predisposing Child Characteristics

Hyperactivity, also known as attention deficit Hyperactivity disorder is predominantly genetically determined. Children who show this restless, impulsive pattern of behaviour do not necessarily start off aggressive, but over time a proportion become so. They have difficulty waiting their turns in social encounters and games and so easily provoke retaliation and get into fights. Where hyperactivity and conduct disorder coexist from an early age the long term outlook is especially poor.

Delinquents have repeatedly been shown to have an IQ that is 8-10 points lower than law abiding peers—and this is before the onset of aggressive behaviour. Other traits predisposing to conduct problems include irritability and explosiveness, lack of social awareness and social anxiety, and reward seeking behaviour.

The interplay between a child's characteristics and the environment is complex. As children grow older, their environment is increasingly determined by their own behaviour and choices. There may be turning points when certain decisions set the scene for years to come. Thus it is not simply a young person's level of antisocial behaviour per se that determines later outcome but also how the behaviour shapes the social world inhabited later on. This has important implications for intervention.

4.4.9 Environmental Stressors

4.4.9.1 Temperature

When the temperature rises people tend to feel more disposed to aggressive behaviour. A researcher looked at incidents of violence across the USA and the corresponding weather reports. He found that when it was moderately hot (84°F) there was the most violence, but after the weather showed higher temperature, the violence decreased. This was backed up by a lab study by Baron and Bell who put participants in rooms of different temperatures then increased the heat in each of the rooms. The participants were asked to give electric shocks. They found that as the temperature rose, the participants gave more electric shocks, but then once the temperatures got to extreme levels, the shocks decreased. However, another researcher called Anderson looked at cases of violent acts including rape, murder and assault. He found that there was a steady increase as the temperature rose but that there was no indication of decline in extreme heat. One problem with this theory is that it would probably not be true to say that people in hotter countries are more aggressive.

4.4.9.2 Crowding

A higher density of people leads to higher levels of aggression. This theory links to de-individuation. It is also unpleasant when your personal space is invaded. For example, there is the most aggression along the most heavily-congested roads. There are more prison riots when the population density in the prison is higher. A study shows there was more aggression in a day nursery as the nursery got more crowded.

However, this pattern is not found in families, as people expect others to be in close proximity. This suggests that it is not just a high density, but overcrowding that is the problem. There are also limitations to this, as some people do not find encroachment of their personal space to be a problem. Furthermore, there are

also cultural differences e.g. Arabs tend to stand very close together. Also, if you can confront people about it, aggression can be reduced. Both crowding and heat lead to physiological arousal which leads to aggression. However, this may depend on your interpretation of the arousal; for example, crowds can be uplifting, fun and exciting.

4.4.9.3 Noise

Noise is an unwanted sound that causes a negative effect. It can cause aggression when it is too loud or unpredictable. Glass and Singer conducted an experiment where participants were asked to complete a maths task and were then asked to complete a proof-reading task. During the maths task, some of participants were subjected to noise, but all of them had quietness and no noise during the proof-reading task. It was found that the people who had the noise in the first task made more mistakes in the second task. They made the most mistakes when the noise was very loud, was random and when they had no control over it.

Self Assessment Questions

1) Discuss the various causes of aggressive behaviour.

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2) What are the neurophysiologic factors that contribute to aggressive behaviour.

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3) Put forward the biological causes of aggression.

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4) Discuss the interaction between environment and genes in contributing to aggressive behaviour.

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- 5) In what ways parental rearing style and parental interaction cause aggression.
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- 6) Discuss the parental influence on children's emotions and attitudes and the influence that the difficulties the child has with friends in then school.
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- 7) Enumerate the various predisposing child characteristic factors in causing aggression
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- 8) What are the various environmental stressors that cause aggression.
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4.5 THEORIES OF AGGRESSION

4.5.1 Psychodynamic Theory

Freud argued that all human beings possess two important instincts, the life instinct (Eros) and the death instinct (Thanatos). The conflict between life and death instincts results in self-destructive tendencies which lead to aggressive behaviour. The struggle between life and death instincts creates a build up of tension in our unconscious mind. This tension needs to be released, either through suitable outlets such as sport (sublimation) or onto others (displacement). Failure to relieve these aggressive impulses may result in an outburst of uncontrollable aggression. Freud's theory is also known as the hydraulic model of aggression.

4.5.2 Frustration-Aggression Theory

It is essentially a behaviourist approach that suggests aggression is a learned response to frustration. Frustration occurs when an individual is exposed to external situations (stimulus) that cause discomfort or anger e.g. prolonged queuing,

overcrowding, failure to achieve a goal, etc. Frustration is cumulative – it builds up in an individual until it is discharged via an aggressive act (response). The frustration-aggression hypothesis is sometimes known as drive-reduction theory. Dollard et al claim that Frustration always causes aggression, and Aggression is always caused by frustration.

4.5.3 Cognitive Neo-association Theory

Berkowitz (1993) has proposed that aversive events such as frustrations, provocations, loud noises, uncomfortable temperatures, and odors produce negative affect. Negative affect produced by unpleasant experiences automatically stimulates various thoughts, memories, expressive motor reactions, and physiological responses associated with both fight and flight tendencies. In cognitive neo-association theory, aggressive thoughts, emotions, and behavioural tendencies are linked together in memory (Collins & Loftus 1975).

Concepts with similar meanings e.g., hurt, harm and, concepts that frequently are activated simultaneously e.g., shoot, gun, develop strong associations. When a concept is primed or activated, this activation spreads to related concepts and increases their activation as well. Cognitive neo-association theory not only subsumes the earlier frustration-aggression hypothesis (Dollard et al. 1939), but it also provides a causal mechanism for explaining why aversive events increase aggressive inclinations, i.e., via negative affect (Berkowitz 1993). This model is particularly suited to explain hostile aggression, but the same priming and spreading activation processes are also relevant to other types of aggression.

4.5.4 Social Learning Theory

According to social learning theories (Bandura, 2001; Mischel 1999), people acquire aggressive responses the same way they acquire other complex forms of social behaviour—either by direct experience or by observing others. Social learning theory explains the acquisition of aggressive behaviours, via observational learning processes, and provides a useful set of concepts for understanding and describing the beliefs and expectations that guide social behaviour. Patterson's work on family interactions and the development of antisocial behaviour patterns relies heavily on this approach.

4.5.5 Script Theory

Huesmann (1998) proposed that when children observe violence in the mass media, they learn aggressive scripts. Scripts define situations and guide behaviour. The person first selects a script to represent the situation and then assumes a role in the script. Once a script has been learned, it may be retrieved at some later time and used as a guide for behaviour. This approach can be seen as a more specific and detailed account of social learning processes. Scripts are sets of particularly well-rehearsed, highly associated concepts in memory, often involving causal links, goals, and action plans. When items are so strongly linked that they form a script, they become a unitary concept in semantic memory. Furthermore, even a few script rehearsals can change a person's expectations and intentions involving important social behaviours.

4.5.6 Excitation Transfer Theory

Excitation transfer theory (Zillmann 1983) notes that physiological arousal dissipates

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slowly. If two arousing events are separated by a short amount of time, arousal from the first event may be misattributed to the second event. If the second event is related to anger, then the additional arousal should make the person even angrier.

4.6.7 Social Interaction Theory

Social interaction theory (Tedeschi & Felson 1994) interprets aggressive behaviour as social influence behaviour, that is, an actor uses coercive actions to produce some change in the target's behaviour. Coercive actions can be used by an actor to obtain something of value e.g., information, money, goods, sex, services, safety, to exact retributive justice for perceived wrongs, or to bring about desired social and self identities e.g., toughness, competence. This theory provides an excellent way to understand recent findings that aggression is often the result of threats to high self-esteem, especially to unwarranted high self-esteem i.e., narcissism.

4.5.8 Social Information Processing Theories

Although there is not yet one common theory of SIP in aggressive individuals, Crick and Dodge (1994) have convincingly integrated various constructs from studies on child and adolescent aggression.

According to their model, individuals in social situations:

- 1 perceive and encode the situational and social cues,
- 1 form a mental representation and interpretation of the situation,
- 1 select a goal or desired outcome for the interaction,
- 1 recall or construct possible reactions to the situation,
- 1 evaluate these reactions and finally,
- 1 initiate what they expect to be an adequate action.

The model suggests that some individuals develop specific characteristics of SIP that enhance their risk of aggressive behaviour. These processes are inferred from contents of the memory store, acquired rules, social schemata, and social knowledge.

Studies show that when aggressive youngsters encode situational cues, they focus more on aggression-relevant stimuli, they remember more aggression-relevant details of a situation, and they over perceive aggression in their partners. When interpreting the cues, aggressive children are less able to recognise the specific intentions and motivations of others, and they exhibit a tendency to attribute hostile intentions to others.

In the third phase, more egocentric and antisocial goals have been found in aggressive youngsters. They try more frequently to maximise their own utility even when this injures others, or they are more interested in dominating the interaction rather than maintaining a relationship. In the phase of response access or construction, aggressive children generate more aggressive and hostile alternatives (Zelli et al., 1999). This does not seem to be because of a generally smaller number of stored response schemata.

However, their repertoire of reactions lacks variety and is dominated by aggressive, impulsive, and sometimes fanciful reactions. In the phase of response evaluation and decision, antisocial individuals have a more short-term estimation of consequences. They also seem to expect more self-efficacy and relatively positive consequences of aggressive behaviour (Zelli et al., 1999).

These evaluations may be derived from enduring beliefs learned in the family and in peer groups. In the sixth phase, individuals initiate the reaction that seems to be most appropriate and in line with their goals.

Models of SIP assume that individuals go through these phases more or less automatically and with little if any reflection. Although the processes may depend partially on dispositions of neuropsychological functioning and temperament, the content of SIP is attributed mainly to learning in social contexts (e.g., Bandura, 1973).

For example, experiences of aggression, conflict, abuse, and inappropriate parenting in the family seem to have a basic influence. Aggression-prone schemata and beliefs may also be learned via media consumption, at school, and particularly in peer groups. The respective cognitions influence interactions in peer groups, and the resulting behaviour is again evaluated and reinforced cyclically by them (Crick & Dodge, 1994). Eventual changes in SIP may be because of new social experiences, differentiations of cognitive schemata, and acquired social skills during development.

4.5.9 General Aggression Model

In General Aggression Model (GAM), Anderson and Bushman (2002) tried to integrate existing mini-theories of aggression into a unified whole. The model is based on the concept of knowledge structures and how they operate to produce behaviour. Knowledge structures arise out of experience, influence perception, can become more or less automatic in some cases, and are linked to affective states, beliefs and behaviour. In essence, they are used to guide responses to the environment. Knowledge structures include perceptual schemata, person schemata, and behavioural scripts which define the kinds of behaviours that are appropriate in various situations. The model focuses on characteristics of person and the situation as they relate to a person's present internal state (affect, arousal and cognition), and ultimately appraisal and decision making processes. Appraisal and decision making processes lead to either impulsive or thoughtful actions, which in turn cycle back to the next social encounter.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Discuss the psychodynamic theory of aggression.

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2) In what ways frustration aggression theory explains aggression.

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3) What is cognitive neo association theory? How does it explain aggression.

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4) Delineate social learning theory from the point of view of learning aggressive behaviour.

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5) What is script theory? How does it explain aggression?

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6) Discuss excitation transfer theory and social information processing theories in terms of explaining aggression.

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7) Explain aggression from the point of view of social interaction theory.

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- 8) Put forward the general aggression model and explain aggression in terms of the same.

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4.6 INTERVENTION TO REDUCE AGGRESSION

Treatment needs to be targeted at major modifiable risk factors and its outcome measured objectively. It should preferably be at an early age as conduct disorder can be reliably detected early, has high continuity, is amenable to treatment at a young age, and is very hard to eradicate in older children..

4.6.1 Parent Training Programmes for Reducing Antisocial Behaviour in Children

Little published evidence exists that individual psychotherapy whether psychodynamic or cognitive behavioural, pharmacotherapy, general eclectic family work, or formal family therapy are effective in treating conduct disorder. Behaviourally based programmes to help parents, however, have consistently been shown to be effective. For example, the pioneering work of Patterson and colleagues showed that directly instructing parents while they interact with their children leads to significant and lasting reduction in behavioural problems. Many other studies have replicated this.

4.6.2 Developing a Programme

It is better to organise a training programme for the parents and teenage children and this can be done by two or three disciplines coming together. To get results the professionals need to be trained in the specific methods, and for this one needs a manual and a training centre with well qualified trainers. Most consistently effective programmes have at least 10 sessions, to increase the effects, a booster is desirable several months later. Also, intervention needs to be early, since teenage treatments have only small effects.

4.6.3 Training Using Videotapes

Although conventional one-to-one treatment is effective, a more cost effective approach is needed to treat larger numbers. One could have videos showing short vignettes of parents and children in common situations. They show the powerful effect of parents' behaviour on their child's activity, with examples of "right" and "wrong" ways to handle children. Ten to 14 parents attend a weekly two hour session for 12 weeks. Two therapists lead the group and promote discussion, so that all members grasp the principles; role play is used to practice the new techniques. Practical homework is set each week and carefully reviewed with a trouble shooting approach.

4.6.4 Other Training Programmes

Among more intensive programmes, the one developed by Puckering et al entails one day a week for 16 weeks. This programme has been shown to be effective in improving parenting in quite damaged families and enabling children to come off “at risk” child protection registers.

4.6.5 Failure of Parent Training

In many cases, aggression is caused by faulty parental behaviour, often because of parental psychiatric difficulties such as depression, drug and alcohol problems, and personality difficulties.

4.6.6 Management of Hyperactivity

Hyperactivity is distinct from conduct disorder, although they often coexist. Psychological treatment has to be rather different. Rewards have to be given more contingently and more frequently and have to be changed more often. Tasks have to be broken down into shorter components. Specific, clear rules have to be set for each different situation, as these children have difficulty generalising. School is often particularly difficult as the demands for concentration are great, the distractions from other children higher than at home, and the level of adult supervision lower. However, use of the principles outlined above can lead to useful improvements.

Management with drugs (usually methylphenidate or dexamphetamine) is reserved for children with severe symptoms in both home and school (hyperkinetic syndrome). This syndrome occurs in just over 1% of boys. The short term effects of drug treatment are large; less is known about long term benefits.

4.6.7 Interventions at Schools

Early preventive educational programmes can reduce later aggressive behaviour.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) What kind of parent training programme will be useful in reducing aggression.

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- 2) What are the various methods of developing a programme of intervention in Aggression?

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- 3) Discuss the various other training programme for intervention in aggression and indicate if there is failure of parent training how would it affect the interventions?

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- 4) How will you manage hyperactivity?

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- 5) In what ways one could organise intervention programmes in schools for reducing aggression

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4.7 LET US SUM UP

Aggression is the delivery of an aversive stimulus from one person to another, with intent to harm and with an expectation of causing such harm, when the other person is motivated to escape or avoid the stimulus. Accidental harm is not aggressive because it is not intended. Harm that is an incidental by-product of helpful actions is also not aggressive, because the harm-doer believes that the target is not motivated to avoid the action e.g., pain experienced during a dental procedure. There are different types of aggression. Theoretical perspectives on aggression suggest that typographically and functionally distinct subtypes of aggression exist. It is important to consider the multidimensional nature of aggression because different stimuli combine with different types of physiological and mental processes to create distinct forms of aggression. Treatment needs to be targeted at major modifiable risk factors and its outcome measured objectively. It should preferably be at an early age as aggression is amenable to treatment at a young age and is very hard to eradicate in adults

4.8 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Define the term aggression and discuss various types of aggression.
- 2) Describe the salient factors that contribute in the development of aggressive behaviour pattern.

- 3) Why do people behave aggressively as they do, critically evaluate?
- 4) Compare and contrast different theoretical models of aggression.
- 5) Design an intervention program to control aggression.

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UNIT 1 INTRODUCTION TO ATTITUDE AND STEREOTYPES

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Nature of Attitudes
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 - 1.2.2 Attitude and Beliefs
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Attitude is a word frequently used by us in our day to day life. In its common sense it refers to an individual's specific state of mind through which he expresses his opinions and feelings towards some conditions, things, event and persons in his social environment. For example, a person who feels favourably for widow remarriage may advocate widow remarriage, write some article in favour of it or even remarry his widow daughter, thus expressing his attitude towards the issue of widow remarriage. Psychologists, Sociologists and other social scientists have taken undertaken various researches to throw light on different aspects of attitude and related concepts like stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. In this unit we will try to understand the meaning, characteristics, causal and maintenance factors of these various concepts. To begin with we will start from attitude.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- 1 Define and describe attitude in your own words;
- 1 Describe the characteristics of attitude;

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- 1 Elucidate theories of organisation of attitude;
- 1 Define stereotype;
- 1 Describe the characteristics of stereotype;
- 1 Analyse the formation of stereotype;
- 1 Differentiate between stereotype and prejudice;
- 1 Analyse the factors contributing to stereotype and prejudice; and
- 1 Analyse factors causing and maintaining prejudice and discrimination.

1.2 NATURE OF ATTITUDES

In the beginning psychologists defined attitude in terms of one dimension i.e. attitude is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given object. Thus the essence of attitude was a person's intensity of feelings toward some object. However, some psychologists tried to explain attitude in terms of two dimensions namely, affective and cognitive components.

Cognitive component refers to a person's opinions and beliefs toward some object or event. For example, a person's beliefs and opinions regarding widow remarriage. Affective component means how strongly a person feels for the event or object in question. This feeling may be for or against. Some were of the view that attitude has three dimensions i.e. affective, cognitive and behavioural. This approach is known as ABC of attitude. Behavioural component indicates action a person would take in favour of or against the event or object of attitude. As said earlier a person having favourable attitude towards widow remarriage may organise meetings, give lectures in favor of widow remarriage or even go to the extent of marrying a widow.

These three components of attitude have some characteristics, understanding of which is imperative, in order to understand the nature of attitudes.

Valence— it refers to the degree of favorableness or unfavorableness to the object or event in question.

Multiplexity— components of attitude have the characteristic of multiplexity. It means the number of elements a component has. Higher the number of elements in a component the more complex it would be.

Consistency— it is found more among the valence factors than among multiplexity.

1.2.1 Characteristics of Attitudes

- a) **Attitude is learnt:** A person is not born with attitude but he or she acquires it through the process of becoming an acceptable member of the group he/ she belongs to. Also a person develops attitude from the experiences of life. These experiences and process of socialisation may predispose a person favourably or unfavorably to the object or event in question.
- b) **Attitude gives direction:** Attitude directs our behaviour in either away from an object or toward the object. For example, a favourable attitude

toward education will impel the person to send his children to school for formal education for the betterment of their life, while an unfavourable attitude may prompt him for not sending children to school.

- c) **Relative permanency:** It means attitudes are stable over time and changes in them take place only gradually.
- d) **Attitude is always related to some issue, object or thing:** This means for the development of attitude occurrence of some event, thing or person is a must. Attitudes do not take place in vacuum.
- e) **Attitude has motivational properties:** Attitude motivates a person to do some behaviours more readily than others. For example an individual having positive attitude for sports may readily go for play than pass his time reading some book.

1.2.2 Attitude and Beliefs

An attitude is closely related to belief. Before exploring the relation between the two it is important that we first understand their meaning. A belief is defined as “an enduring organisation of perceptions and cognitions about some aspect of the individual’s world.” Beliefs are cognitions or thoughts about the characteristics of objects. As of attitude we know that it is an organised system of cognitive, affective and behavioural component. Analysis of the definitions of the two concepts reveal following similarities:

Both are enduring organisation of different components.

Like attitude belief also has cognitive component.

Despite above mentioned similarities, the two concepts have following differences:

Attitude has all the three components i.e. cognitive, affective and behavioral while belief primarily has cognitive component and behavioral component is secondary. For example, a person may think that reservation in jobs is against natural justice. This is only his thinking (cognitive) and lacks any kind of feelings (affective) but he may be prompted to deliver a lecture about his views on this issue (behaviour).

An attitude has motivational properties and it directs our efforts in specific direction while a belief does not have this property.

Belief is part of attitude. All attitudes toward an object have relevant beliefs about that object.

Beliefs are based on real facts while attitude is based more on imagination and less on reality.

Change in attitude comes faster than in beliefs.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Discuss the nature of attitudes. Give suitable examples.

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2) List out the characteristics of attitudes.

3) Differentiate between attitudes and beliefs. Give examples.

1.3 THEORIES OF ATTITUDE ORGANISATION

Social psychologists gave a number of theories to explain attitude organisation. These theories can be clubbed under four categories.

1) Cognitive consistency theories- it includes following theories:

- 1 Heider's Balance theory.
- 1 Newcomb's A-B-X theory.
- 1 Festinger's Cognitive dissonance theory.
- 1 Rosenberg's affective-cognitive consistency theory.
- 1 Congruity theory.

2) Social learning theories include in it the following theories:

- 1 Theory based upon classical conditioning.
- 1 Theory based upon instrumental conditioning.

3) Functional theories include following theories:

- 1 Katz and Stotland theory.
- 1 Smith, Bruner and White theory.

4) Miscellaneous theories are:

- 1 Kelman's three process theory.
- 1 Assimilation contrast theory.
- 1 Adaptation level theory.

Here we will discuss a few select theories.

1.3.1 Heider's Balance Theory

Heider's Balance Theory-also known as P-O-X model it was given by Heider in 1946,1958. It has three elements.

- 1) First is the perceiver known as P.
- 2) Second, another person called O and
- 3) Third X an object of perception.

Pairs thus formed of these elements have two kinds of relationships, that is, unit relations and affective relations. Unit relations between pairs of elements depend on similarity, ownership, and similar membership. Affective relations are based on liking and disliking. Unit relations and affective relations may be positive or negative. Heider further stated that elements may be in a state of balance or imbalance. When balanced the individual feels relaxed and there is no tension. However, a state of imbalance between elements creates tension and motivates individual to restore balance.

Let us understand through an example.

Suppose Sunil (P) likes Krishan (X) and also likes Preeti (O) as well.

But Preeti is not liked by Krishan.

Here relations between Sunil and Krishan, Sunil and Preeti are positive but relations between Krishan and Preeti are negative.

This state of affairs is disturbing for Sunil. Now Sunil has to change his relations either with Krishan or Preeti. If he starts disliking Krishan, balance is restored or he should start disliking Preeti to restore balance.

1.3.2 Katz's Functional Theory

Katz (1960) Katz and Stotland (1959) opined that motivational basis is the key to understanding attitudes. The motivational basis is conceptualised in terms of functions which an attitude performs for the person. According to them an attitude serves the following four functions:

1) Instrumental, adjustive or utilitarian function

It means that individual tries to maximise the rewards and minimise punishment. Thus he develops favorable attitude towards those objects which result in reward and unfavorable attitudes toward those which lead to punishment.

2) The ego-defensive function

Attitude protects a person from acknowledging unpleasant realities about himself or environment. For example, a person filled with feelings of insecurity or low self-esteem may develop strong prejudice against members of minority group to compensate for feelings of insecurity or low self-esteem.

3) The value-expressive function

Holding attitudes commensurate with our personal values or self-concept gives us satisfaction.

4) The knowledge function

Every individual is presumed to have a basic drive to understand, to make sense out of, to structure his experience. Elements of experience that are inconsistent with what a person knows are rearranged or changed to achieve consistency.

1.3.3 Kelman's Three Process Theory

Kelman suggested that attitude organisation is influenced by three distinct processes of social influence namely, Compliance, Identification and Internalisation.

- 1) Compliance can be said to occur when an individual accepts influence from another person or from a group because he hopes to achieve a favorable reaction from the other.

Here, the expression of opinion, despite the fact that privately the person may not agree with it, is instrumental in gaining some reward or avoiding it. Thus an employee knowing that his boss is proud of the jokes he tells may laugh heartily at them even though he does not think they are funny. In this way he is able to avoid his boss's displeasure.

- 2) Identification can be said to occur when an individual adopts behaviour derived from another person or a group because this behavior is associated with a satisfying self-defining relationship to this person or group.

This is a means of establishing or maintaining a desirable relation to the other or group and of supporting the self-definition that part of the relation. One form which identification takes is shown in attempts to be like the other person or to actually be the other person. This is commonly observed in children who copy the behaviour and attitude of their parents or other models. However, identification like compliance does not occur because the behaviour or attitude itself is satisfying to the individual. It occurs because of the satisfying relation to another person or group and it requires the activation of the relation in order for it to occur.

- 3) Internalisation occurs when an individual accepts influence because the induced behavior is congruent with his value system.

Here the content of induced attitude or behaviour is internally rewarding. The attitude or behaviour helps solve a problem or is demanded by the values of the individual.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) What are the various theories of attitude organisation?

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- 2) Discuss Katz' functional theory.

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3) Discuss Kellman's theory of attitude organisation.

4) List the various cognitive consistence theories and elucidate one of them.

1.4 STEREOTYPES

A stereotype is a cluster of beliefs usually lacking a rational basis regarding the members of some group. The word 'stereotype' was first used by Walter Lipman in his book "Public Opinion" (1922).

According to Albrecht, Thomas & Chadwick (1980) "A stereotype is a belief about some particular trait being prevalent among all members of a social group. Whatever be the characteristic it is assumed to vest all people in that category. Therefore, all members of the group are perceived and understood alike." From above definitions it can be concluded that:

- 1 Stereotype is a set of beliefs used to categorise people.
- 1 Such categorisation is exaggerated and lacks in truth.
- 1 This categorisation provides for the basis for gross generalisation about people.
- 1 Some particular physical, social and cultural characteristics are ascertained which serve to identify people of that group.
- 1 There is general consensus as to the prevalence of a particular trait among people of that category.
- 1 It is assumed that a person will exhibit all the traits of that category simply because he is member of that group.

1.4.1 Characteristics of Stereotypes

Stereotype is a mental picture or image about people of a community or category on the basis of which we ascribe traits or characteristics to people.

Stereotype is a widely agreed belief about people of some category or community. For example, it is widely agreed that politicians are opportunist.

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Stereotype involves gross and exaggerated generalisations. An important characteristic of stereotype is that they develop out of experiences with individuals of other community and are then extended to apply to all members of that community. For example, it is generally believed that Bengalees are timid by nature. This may be true for some people of Bengali community but certainly not for all Bengalees.

Stereotypes usually are not amenable to change despite information and evidence to the contrary. For example, when we encounter a brave, fearless and bold Bengali we do not change our stereotype about them instead we say that this person is exception among Bengalees.

Positive or negative stereotype: A stereotype can have either direction i.e. it can be positive or negative. For example, Japanese are generally believed to be industrious and diligent and Bengalees are usually thought to be timid and shy.

1.4.2 Development and Maintenance of Stereotypes

Stereotypes are acquired. Psychologists have delineated following factors that go into development and maintenance of stereotypes.

A major cause of development of stereotypes is inadequate and improper experience and information about people of other group. Experiences with handful of people of other community lead to formation of wrong notions about them and it is then generalised to all members of that community.

Socialisation: Process of socialisation plays an important role in the formation of stereotypes. Most important agent of socialisation are parents. Many parents encourage their children to develop stereotypes thinking it will better prepare them to deal with people of other community.

Imitation: In order to become an acceptable member of the community or society we live in, we simply imitate beliefs, opinions and attitudes held by them without even thinking their desirability and logical validity. Result is that knowingly or unknowingly we develop stereotypes. Perhaps this is the reason a person born in Hindu community easily adopts stereotypes held by other people of Hindu community but he will not with that ease adopt stereotypes held by Muslim community.

Traditions and folkways: Traditions and folkways prevalent in a culture also help foster stereotypes. Everybody tries to behave according to the traditions, customs and folkways prevalent in the society because doing so brings prestige and social reputation.

Social and cultural distance: Social and cultural distance is another important factor in the development and maintenance of stereotypes. Social distance prevents us from gaining right knowledge and information about people of other community and society. Similarly, due to cultural distance we lack knowledge about living style, habits, customs, beliefs, opinions and attitudes of people of other culture. This lack of correct knowledge and information about other people provides breeding ground for development and maintenance of stereotypes.

1.4.3 Stereotypes and Social Life

Stereotypes have profound importance in social life as they directly affect social interactions. For example, teachers are usually thought to be idealistic and

accordingly we expect conversation with teachers to take idealistic tone. Thus our behaviour naturally orients toward idealistic patterns.

Stereotypes serve a number of social functions as given below:

- 1) Stereotypes help understand social behaviour. Stereotype that politicians are opportunist helps us understand their behaviour and we are not easily taken in by their statements and claims.
- 2) Stereotypes help control social behaviour. In fact stereotypes equip us with a power that automatically directs our behaviour in a specific direction. For example, Americans are known to be friendly. Therefore when dealing with an American we are in relaxed mood and try to be frank and friendly with them.
- 3) Stereotypes help in prediction. Whether right or wrong stereotypes control our social interaction. We even predict behaviour on the basis of stereotypes. For example, Nepali servants are believed to be brave, honest, and reliable. Thus we can predict that our house and property will remain safe in the hands of a Nepali servant, when we are out on vacations.

1.4.4 Difference between Stereotype and Prejudice

Since our next topic would be Prejudice and Discrimination it would be relevant to differentiate between stereotypes and prejudice. The two concepts are very similar with very fine difference between them. Following are the differences between the two:

In stereotype all members of a community are treated alike as they are believed to have same characteristics while prejudice can take any direction it can be positive or negative both.

A prejudice is a type of attitude and has all the three components i.e. affective, cognitive and behavioural. However, stereotype is cognitions and expectations from person simply because the person is a member of a particular group or community.

Stereotypes are comparatively more stable than prejudices.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Define stereotypes.

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- 2) Describe the characteristics of stereotypes.

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3) How are stereotypes developed and maintained?

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4) Differentiate between stereotypes and prejudice.

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1.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we studied the concept of attitude and the three components of attitudes namely cognitive, affective and behavioural. We also discussed how these components direct our behaviour. This was followed by a discussion on characteristics of attitudes. We now understand the nature of attitudes in full. We know that attitudes are acquired through process of socialisation and learning. We also understand why people differ in intensity and strength on the same attitude. Next we discussed the concept of stereotypes, their characteristics, how stereotypes are formed and developed. We also studied the functions of stereotypes in social life and the difference between stereotypes and prejudice.

1.6 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you understand by the term attitude? Discuss in detail how attitudes are formed and maintained.
- 2) Write an essay on stereotypes and their utility in social life.
- 3) Discuss Katz's functional theory of attitude organisation.
- 4) How do stereotypes contribute to prejudice?
- 5) Discuss the various theories of attitude organisation.

1.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

Secord, P.F. and Backman, C.W. (1974). *Social Psychology*. McGraw Hill , New York

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UNIT 2 FORMATION OF ATTITUDE AND ATTITUDE CHANGE

Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Factors of Attitude Formation
- 2.3 Attitude Change
- 2.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.5 Unit End Questions
- 2.6 Suggested Readings

2.0 INTRODUCTION

An attitude is a hypothetical construct in that it can only be inferred through the behaviour of the individual. Attitudes are acquired and they develop out of influence of many factors. On the basis of researches and studies conducted, the psychologists have identified factors that determine development and formation of attitudes. This unit is focussed on the issues of how attitudes are formed, what factors constitute attitude formation and what are the methods by which one can change the attitude.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- 1 Explain attitude formation;
- 1 List the factors that contribute to attitude formation;
- 1 Analyse the process of attitude change;
- 1 Describe the role of persuasive communication in attitude change; and
- 1 Explain the role of various factors in attitude change.

2.2 FACTORS OF ATTITUDE FORMATION

Need Satisfaction: Research studies on “Need Satisfaction”, reveal that we tend to develop favourable attitude toward things which help us satisfy our needs. As is well known, whenever something hinders our reaching a goal or stop us from doing something that we want to or frustrate our attempts to satisfy our goals and needs, we feel negatively for those things which stand in our way. For example, in an experimental study it was found that students developed favourable attitudes toward those things which they viewed were instrumental in the attainment of goal. But they had negative attitude toward things that were of no use in goal attainment or which hindered goal achievement.

Social learning: This is another factor that plays an important role in the development of attitude. Process of learning affects the development of attitude

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and the way an individual learns other forms of behaviour. Three processes of learning affect development of attitudes and these are (i) Classical conditioning (ii) Instrumental conditioning and (iii) Observational learning. These are being discussed below:

Classical Conditioning: According to classical learning a neutral stimulus comes to elicit an unconditioned response when repeatedly paired with an unconditioned stimulus. Social psychologists opine that it applies to the development of attitudes as well. For example, when a child repeatedly listens from his father that Pakistan is an enemy country, and all the terrorist activities in our country are Pakistan supported, the child gradually develops a negative attitude towards Pakistan, even though initially the word Pakistan was a neutral word for him.

In a classic experiment on the role of classical conditioning in attitude formation, two nation words – Dutch and Swedish were presented before a group of subjects. When the word Dutch was presented it was followed by recitation of positive adjectives like happy, laborious and sacred etc. But the word Swedish was followed by recitation of negative adjectives like dirty, ugly, bitter etc.

At the end of the experiment it was found that subjects had developed positive attitude toward the nation word Dutch as it was followed by positive adjectives and a negative attitude among subjects was evident for the nation word Swedish. It was presumed that repeated pairing with positive words elicited a positive response for nation word Dutch.

Instrumental Conditioning: According to this theory of learning states, we learn those responses that are rewarded and show an increased probability of repeating such responses. However, we tend not to repeat responses that are punished. Studies reveal that children develop attitudes maintained by their parents simply because holding such attitudes is rewarding. Exhibition of attitudes and behaviour similar to parents is often met with reward and praise from parents and dissimilarities or deviation is met with punishment and admonition. Thus children soon learn that holding attitudes similar to that of parents is instrumental in getting the desired results.

Observational learning: A number of behaviours are learned by watching the activities of others and the outcome of such activities. Children growing often watch parents and significant others in the family and society doing things which they follow without questioning the wisdom or logic behind these activities. They follow without question only because they trust in the wisdom of their parents and significant others in the family and society.

Group Affiliations: Group affiliations are an important source of formation and development of attitude. An individual adopts the values, norms, opinions, beliefs and way of behaviour in order to become an acceptable member of that group, because following the line suggested by the group is rewarding. Besides group exerts pressure for conformity to group and nonconformity is met with punishment. According to social psychologists group affiliations affect attitude formation.

Primary group is immediate group of the individual that is family, peer group etc. Such groups have limited number of members and enjoy face to face interactions. Since primary groups are based on close cooperation, affinity and compassion members of primary group often develop similar attitudes. Family members

particularly parents have tremendous influence over development of attitude among children. According to social psychologists attitudinal homogeneity among primary group members can be attributed to four reasons.

Since primary groups are closely interknit, members face too much pressure for conformity to group. Therefore members of primary group are more likely to show attitudinal similarity. Primary groups create conditions where attitudes of one member are favourable to other members which breeds liking among them. This liking breeds further similarity and this similarity in turn leads to attitudinal similarity.

All members of the primary group receive similar or same information. They are more likely to process and analyse the information in more or less similar fashion thus developing attitudinal homogeneity.

Any new member of a primary group is more likely to develop attitudes similar to the group in order to gain acceptance in that group.

Reference group is a group, the individual is not a member of which but he aspires to be like members of that group. Thus such a group is used as standard for reference or comparison. Usually a person identifies with such groups by changing or adopting values, norms, goals similar to that of reference group.

Cultural Factors: Cultural factors also affect the development of attitudes. Every society has its culture and every culture has its traditions, norms, values, religion etc. Thus socialisation of every person is affected by the cultural factors of that society. Studies reveal that people reared in different cultures exhibit different attitudes while people reared in the same culture show similarity of attitudes. For example, a marriage proposal between first cousins is viewed favorably in Muslim culture while in Hindu culture it is viewed with disdain.

In one of the studies it was found that cultural differences lead to development of certain common attitudes among members of a given culture. For example, members of Arapesh tribe are liberal, cooperative, and kindhearted. On the other hand members Mundugumor tribe are usually aggressive, zealous and selfish. Anthropologists concluded that it was due to difference in emphasis on the development of different personality traits among the two cultures.

Personality Factor: Personality traits also have an important role to play in the formation and development of attitudes. Attitudes which are in consonance of personality traits are acquired easily. In a research study it was found that persons with highly organised attitudinal system accept merits and demerits of their personality as a matter of conscience. Some other studies found that people with low IQ and literacy level are usually conservative, suspicious, hostile and has a tendency to attribute their faults to others.

Stereotypes: Every society is characterised with some stereotypes. Stereotypes are simple generalised expectations about people of other groups. For example, it is believed that women as compared to men are more religious and suggestible, it leads to development of certain attitudes towards women.

Given information: Information given to the individual also plays important role in the formation of attitudes. In modern society modern means of communication, particularly radio and television, play important role in shaping the opinions, views

and attitudes about many a issue of public concern. Although not all types of information have equal effect on attitudes.

Self Assessment Questions

1) What factors contribute to attitude formation?

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2) Describe the processes of attitude formation in terms of social learning.

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3) Put forward the three theories of social learning that are related to mattitude formation.

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4) What is meant by group affiliation and how these factors affect attitude formation.

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5) Discuss the cultural factors that affect the development of attitudes?

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6) What are the personality factors that affect the development of attitudes?

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7) How do stereotypes affect attitude development?

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2.3 ATTITUDE CHANGE

As pointed out earlier attitudes are relatively permanent meaning thereby that they are subject to change but slowly overtime. Psychologists claim that attitude change is of two types

- 1) *Congruent change and*
- 2) *Incongruent change.*

When a favorable attitude becomes more favourable after an incident, it is congruent change. However, when attitude change is unfavourable that is direction of change is opposite of the already held attitude, it is called incongruent change. Two factors are important in attitude

Change:

- i) Other things being equal congruent change in attitude is easier to bring about than incongruent change.
- ii) If the strength, stability and consonance among the present elements of attitude is higher, then congruent change is easier to about than incongruent change.

Psychologists have identified a number of factors that affect attitude change which are as:

Changing reference group: Psychologists found that change in reference group leads to change in attitude as well. In one of the experiments Newcomb (1950) found that a group of fresh entrants of girls were conservative as they were coming from a family of conservative parents. However, environment of the college promoted liberalism and one of the aims of college was to promote liberalism among students. In the last year of college it was found that girls had shifted from conservatism to liberalism.

Changing group affiliations: This has direct bearings on change in attitudes. It has been observed that when a person breaks ties with old group and joins new one, he readily adopts norms, values, opinions and beliefs of the new group. Therefore change in attitudes is also there. However, change in attitude or change in group affiliations depend on two things

- 1) characteristics of group, and
- 2) characteristics of membership in group.

By characteristics of the group we mean norms, values and beliefs of the group. If the standards, norms, beliefs and values of new group are more attractive to

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the individual then the individual is likely to change his attitudes more readily. Similarly, characteristic of membership refers to the individual's position in the new group. If new position in new group accord greater status and power and prestige, then the individual is more likely to change his attitude in the direction held by the group.

For example, if a leader is changing his affiliations from BJP to Congress Party, he may find himself elevated to the level of national level, certainly he would change his attitudes more in favour of Congress and its policies.

Additional information: Change in attitude is also brought about by information received from means like Radio, Television, and Newspaper. The person also gets information through interaction with others. However, change in attitudes resulting from reception of additional information depends on the nature of social situation in which information is given. Psychologists have delineated three types of such social situations which are as follows:

When the additional information is given in front of several people then when individual is alone, attitude change is faster and greater.

When an individual publically accepts and declares his attitudes and beliefs, he commits himself to those attitudes and beliefs. Such public commitment brings about a sort of rigidity in his attitudinal stand and any additional information is likely to bring change in attitudes. However, in a situation where the individual has not made public his attitudes and values i.e. his commitment is private not public. Additional information will bring more change in attitudes because public is not aware of the individual's previous stand on the issue.

It has been noted that attitude change if advocated through discussion method is more successful instead of lecture method. For example, in one of classical experiments in this regard it was aimed to bring attitudinal shift among housewives in favour of beef consumption as compared to other types of meat. One group of housewives was motivated to discuss the issue among themselves and arrived at unanimous conclusion that increased rate of beef consumption is beneficial for several reasons. Another group of housewives was not allowed to discuss the matter but was given a lecture by an expert on benefits of increased beef consumption.

Later on it was found that 30 % of group of housewives who had discussed the matter and reached a unanimous resolution in favour of beef consumption actually registered a shift in their attitude toward beef consumption.

However, only 3% of housewives subjected to lecture method changed their attitude.

Persuasive Communication: By persuasive communication we mean communication of such facts and information as are attractive and appealing to the listener and has direct bearing on the attitudes of the person.

Change in attitude through persuasive communication depends on four factors:

- 1) Source of communication
- 2) Characteristics and content of communication

- 3) Channel of communication, and
- 4) Characteristics of audience.

By source of communication we mean the person who provides information for attitude change. Studies reveal that there are certain characteristics of source which are effective in producing attitude change and these are:

- i) Credibility of the communicator
- ii) Attractiveness of the communicator
- iii) Content and characteristic of communication.

Credibility of the communicator: A person who is viewed as more trustworthy and expert in the issue on hand is likely to bring about more change in attitude. For example, in a study on two groups of students, one group was told that information given to them comes from a highly credible person who is an expert in the field and can be relied upon. But another group was told that information given comes from a person who is not expert in the field and can not be much relied upon. It was found that student receiving information from highly credible source registered greater change as compared to students receiving information from low credible source. Amazingly with the lapse of time source of information loses its relevance and only content of message is retained. Psychologists call it sleeper effect.

Attractiveness of communicator: This also has its impact upon change of attitude. Attractiveness of communicator has two aspects:

- a) physical beauty, and
- b) similarity.

When the communicator is highly beautiful change in attitude is more. For example, a beautiful heroine advocating use of a particular shampoo is more likely to bring change in attitude, than an ordinary looking woman.

Perhaps this is the reason why most of advertisements have beautiful heroines and good looking men for promoting the products of different companies. People are more influenced by people who are like them. Such people are considered to be one of them, and are less expected to deceive the person. For example in a study on Black students, message from black communicator was more effective than message from a white communicator.

Content and characteristic of communication: There are three dimensions of content of communication which are note worthy, and these include (i) fear arousing appeal (ii) Organisation of communication (iii)) Channel of communication .

1) *Fear arousing appeal*

When some information is aimed at arousing fear or negative emotions but at the same time it provides you with alternatives to reduce that fear, it has been found to be more effective. For example, statutory warning on cigarette packets that cigarette smoking is injurious to health, is an example of this type.

2) *Organisation of Communication*

Attitude change is affected by the way in which communication is organised and presented.

The first issue in regard to organisation of communication is the effect of one-sided versus two-sided communication i.e. should a communicator present just the arguments in favour of the change of attitude in receiver or should the arguments be presented with the counter arguments also?

One other issue in regard to organisation of communication is whether the message should draw its own conclusion or it should be left to the audience.

Another issue in organisation and presentation of communication centers over the primacy vs. recency effect that is, whether the information presented first or information presented last is more effective. Let us deal with these issues one by one.

One-sided vs. Two-sided communication: In order to test the effectiveness of one-sided vs. two-sided arguments, social psychologists conducted an experiment to prepare Allied forces soldiers for a long protracted war against Japanese forces, after the surrender of German forces.

In one presentation soldiers were presented with arguments that described toughness of Japanese soldiers, Japanese weapon system and resources and stockpiles of Japanese forces. In another presentation same arguments were presented but it also contained arguments for the possibility of a short duration war, like the earlier victories of Allied forces, the losses incurred by Japanese forces and lowered morale of Japanese commanders after the surrender of German forces.

Results showed that

- i) None of the two types of communication was more effective than the other. However, one interesting fact that emerged was that one-sided communication was more effective with soldiers who were only high school pass and two-sided communication was more effective with graduate soldiers.
- ii) Secondly, initial stance taken by the soldiers also came out to be an important factor. Soldiers who originally expected the war to be short one, were more influenced by two-sided arguments while those who initially expected the war to be a long protracted one, were more influenced by one-sided communication.
- iii) **Innocking effect:** one-sided and two-sided communications also differ in their ability to “inoculate” people against later counter propaganda. In an experiment two sided communication produced astonishing innocking effect among people. In one experimental study two-sided communication was dramatically effective in inoculating the audience. Different groups of subjects who had heard argument that Russia would not be able to produce atomic bomb for next five years were later exposed to counter communication. They differed radically in their receptiveness to the countercommunication, depending upon whether or not the initial message had been one-sided or two sided. Only 2 percent of those who had initially been exposed to one- sided communication retained position advocated by that communication, where as 67 percent of those who had initially been exposed to a two-sided communication retained its position inspite of counter communication.

Primacy versus Recency effect

Whether the information provided first has more effect than the information presented later. When the earlier information is more effective it is known as primacy effect and when information presented later is more effective it is known as recency effect.

Channel of communication: To what extent a communication will be effective depends on which channel of communication is being used. Different channels have differential effect on attitude change.

Radio, television, newspaper etc. are example of mass media directed at communicating with the masses. Communication through mass media is impersonal in the sense that face to face interaction is lacking here. But when a communicator reaches out to audience in person he establishes personal contact with them. It has been found that personal contact more effective than mass media in producing attitude change.

Psychologists found that attitude change is greater when an individual receives information through active participation than when he receives information through pamphlets or posters glued on walls.

Characteristics of audience: Effectiveness of communication aimed at changing attitudes of audience is also dependent upon the characteristics of the audience receiving the message. It has been found that people who are high in self-esteem, self-confidence and are aggressive by nature are less likely to be affected by a communication to change attitude.

Age has also been found to adversely affect change in attitude. Increase in age brings about rigidity and conservatism in thinking thus an aged person is less likely to be affected by persuasive communication.

Enforced contact: One important factor in attitude change is enforced contact. By enforced contact we mean a social situation in which two opposing parties are compelled to interact with each other. For example, when an Indian and a Pakistani are compelled to live in the same room and share other things. It is presumed that such enforced contact allow people to understand each other in a better way through repeated exposure to each other. In such situation people receive first hand information about each other and has the opportunity to test the information received.

2.4 LET US SUM UP

In the preceding paragraphs we studied factors that go in to the development of attitudes. We now know that a number of factors like need satisfaction, social learning, group affiliations, personality factors and cultural factors contribute to the development of attitudes. Thereafter, we discussed the process of attitude change. We discussed the role of group reference, changing group affiliations, persuasive communication and personality factor in bringing about attitudinal change. In persuasive communication we discussed the role of characteristics of communicator and how these affect attitude change. Then we discussed importance of content of the message, its order of presentation and also channel of communication and characteristics of the audience receiving communication. Thus, now we fully and understand the process of attitude change.

2.5 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Discuss in your own words factor of attitude formation.
- 2) What is the role of persuasive communication in attitude change? Give suitable examples.
- 3) Write an essay on process of attitude change.
- 4) What is meant by Primacy and Recency effect and how do they bring about an attitude change?
- 5) Discuss characteristics of audience and enforced contact as responsible for attitude change.

2.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

Baumeister, R. F., & Bushman, B. J. (2008). *Social Psychology and Human Nature*. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth.

Crisp, R. J., & Turner, R. N. (2010). *Essential Social Psychology* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

UNIT 3 PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Characteristics of Prejudice
- 3.3 Types of Prejudice
- 3.4 Discrimination
- 3.5 Development and Maintenance of Prejudice and Discrimination
- 3.6 Manifestation of Prejudice
- 3.7 Methods of Reducing Prejudice and Discrimination
- 3.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.9 Unit End Questions
- 3.10 Suggested Readings

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Social Psychologists tried to define prejudice from different viewpoints. Some psychologists define prejudice as a preconceived irrational judgement, while others define it as an expression of dislike against members of some religion, race or group. However, majority of psychologists agree upon the definition given by Secord and Backman "Prejudice is an attitude that predisposes a person to think, perceive, feel and act in favourable and unfavourable ways towards a group or its individual members." According to Baron & Byrne "Prejudice is generally a negative attitude towards the members of some social, ethnic or religious." Prejudice be it negative or positive is decidedly an attitude and has all the three components of attitude i.e. affective, cognitive and behavioural. In this unit we will be discussing the definition of prejudice, characteristics of prejudice and types of prejudice. We will also be discussing discrimination as a process and how the prejudice and discrimination are developed and maintained. Finally we try to see how one can reduce prejudice and discrimination.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- 1 Define prejudice;
- 1 Describe the nature of prejudice;
- 1 Elucidate the characteristics of prejudice;
- 1 Explain the nature of discrimination.
- 1 Analyse the factors responsible for development and maintenance of prejudice and discrimination;

- 1 Explain how prejudice manifests itself in different ways; and
- 1 Elucidate the methods of reducing prejudice.

3.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF PREJUDICE

Psychologists have identified following characteristics of prejudice:

Prejudice is acquired: Like attitude prejudice is acquired through the process of learning and socialisation. When born a child is like a blank slate and is free of any kind of prejudice. It is only when the process of socialisation begins that he starts imitating his parents and their likes and dislikes. Norms, values, customs, and traditions of the society of which he is member make him prejudiced toward members of other group. Acquisition of prejudice is facilitated by classical conditioning, instrumental and observational learning. A child learns to hate Pakistanis only because he sees significant others in the society hating Pakistanis.

Emotional overtones: Prejudice is always colored with emotions. It is either for or against some group, community or religion. If favourable, the person would show too much affection, love, care and sympathy for members of another group. But if unfavourable the person would show hatred, dislike and hostility.

Prejudice is irrational: Prejudice does not lend itself to reason, wisdom, and relevance. The individual does not change his prejudice in the face of information and evidence to the contrary.

Prejudice is functional: Prejudice helps the individual justify his hostilities, repressed desires and strengthen feelings of self-esteem and prestige. It helps individual justify his exploitation, discrimination of members of other group. For example, in Indian society the upper caste Hindus justified their exploitation of lower castes reasoning that they are like that only and deserve to be exploited and discriminated against.

Prejudice has no connection with reality: It is primarily based on hearsay, incomplete and wrong information, customs and traditions of the society. It can't stand test of logic and reasoning.

3.3 TYPES OF PREJUDICE

Prejudices are of different types depending upon the social conditions of the individual. Sociologist and Psychologists delineate following main types of prejudices:

Racial prejudice: This is aimed at members of another race. For example, Negroes have been subject of racial prejudice at the hand of whites. Similarly, Jews were a target of prejudice by Nazis in Germany. Hitler went to the extent of exterminating at mass scale.

Sex prejudice: This is for centuries women have been target of prejudice. They have been thought of weak, dependent and intellectually less gifted than men.

Caste prejudice: Indian social structure is the best example of such prejudice. Our society is divided into numerous castes and each caste is believed to have specific characteristics.

Language prejudice: This is often evident when we go to different parts of India. Particularly in South India it is very evident. People despise Hindi knowing fully well that it is our national language. They prefer to speak English but not Hindi even if they know Hindi. Infact organisation of states in India has been on linguistic basis.

Religious prejudice: This has been a burning problem in India since pre independence days. Creation of Pakistan was only because of religious differences. In religious prejudice individual holds positive attitude toward his own religion and unfavourable attitude toward other religion. Consequently, misunderstandings and misconceptions about people of other religions crop up.

Some other prejudices are political prejudice, communal prejudice etc.

Self Assessment Questions

1) What is prejudice?

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2) Enumerate the characteristics of prejudice

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3) What are the various types of prejudice? Give suitable examples

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3.4 DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is the differential treatment of individuals belonging to a particular social group or community or religion. It is generally the overt or behavioural expression of prejudice. Generally the person discriminated is denied some privilege or right that is accorded to other members of society who do not belong to the minority group.

According to the exchange theory when the reward-cost outcomes of two separately bounded groups are perceived to be mutually exclusive, so that each group can increase its gains only at the cost of other, members of each group try to protect or increase their outcomes. If the two groups are unequal in power, they will establish different outcomes unless prevented by norms that restrain

exploitation of the weaker by the more powerful. These different outcomes create differences in the status of the two groups.

The extent to which the members of the minority group feel discriminated against and dislike or feel hostile toward the majority group is a function of the relation between their comparison level and that of the majority group. If the minority group has the same comparison level as the majority group, it will feel dissatisfied and hostile. But if comparison is sufficiently low relative to majority group no adverse feelings would occur.

However, 'minority groups' use of comparison level relative to majority group depends upon past experiences, the outcomes available in alternative relations, and structural and cultural factors. For example, in Indian society lower caste people were not allowed to take water from wells reserved for people of upper castes. They were not supposed to sit before people of upper castes and there were many more restrictions imposed upon them simply because they were born in shudra castes.

Sometimes discrimination occurs without the accompanying feeling of prejudice. For example, a proprietor may refuse to accept as patrons members of a minority group because he feels it would injure his business. He may not be prejudiced towards those people but he gives priority to his business.

3.5 DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

Psychologists have categorised the causal and maintenance factors of prejudice as given below:

Status and Power structures: The structure of relations between two groups in terms of relative status and power sometimes gives rise to prejudice. For example, where a dominant group holds another group in a condition of slavery, slaves are likely to be considered lazy, irresponsible and lacking in initiative. These beliefs emerge from the fact that slaves act upon orders from their masters and not given an opportunity to demonstrate initiative or responsibility. Thus the beliefs about them are consonant with their behaviour, which is controlled by structure of relations.

Historical facts: Prejudice and discrimination develop out of history of economic conflict as well as from political power distribution among groups of people . Historical incidents led to the development of attitude which slowly takes form of prejudice. In our society prejudice against women is one such example. Women have always been considered weak, dependant and tools such prejudice developed out of atrocities perpetrated over women and they kept tolerating them thinking it to be their duty.

Similarly some professions have historically been thought to be fit for men than women. For example, truck driving has never been considered fit for women, Women in this profession and other such professions are looked down upon.

Another example of historical reason of prejudice comes from prejudice against Jews. An image of Jews as rich, grasping, and shrewd grew out of their occupational roles as money lenders. The church prohibited Christians from lending

money at interest, but did permit them to borrow from Jews. Thus the Jews became bankers when this occupation was extremely profitable, and the cognitive image commensurate with the role became firmly established. Besides competitive circumstances produced negative effect against Jews.

Situational Factors: The number of situational factors in the immediate environment of the individual also lead to development of prejudice:

Social learning: Every individual during the process of socialisation learns and acquires beliefs, values and attitudes through parents, school, religion and church. These agents of socialisation invariably transmit prejudices held by them to the child. Besides childrearing practices adopted by parents have been shown to help develop prejudice and discrimination.

Job Competition: Scarcity of job avenues and abundance of applicants is one important economic factor for development of prejudice. It led to the emergence of sons of soil theory. For example, the Marathi movement against North Indians in Mumbai and other parts of Maharashtra has one of its reasons based in economic factors. North Indians coming to Mumbai are ready to work for longer hours and that too at cheaper wages as against Local people. They have gradually outpace local people in petty and traditional jobs thus rendering many of people jobless and fending for struggle to survive. It has led them to believe that north Indians are responsible for their plight and are replacing them in their own home. Such beliefs lead to development prejudice against North Indians.

Conformity to Norms: Once prejudice and discrimination against outgroup are well established, the accompanying cognitions and feelings concerning the outgroup acquire a normative quality. They are shared by members of the ingroup and the members expect each other to hold such attitudes. The factors underlying conformity to the norms of prejudice may be explained in terms of the varying reward-cost outcomes ensuing from conformity or nonconformity. If prejudice and discrimination against other group is the norm, then overt expression of prejudice and discrimination will receive approval from other members of the group.

Interaction Patterns: Prejudice and discrimination create certain interaction patterns that contribute to maintenance of the status quo. Several interaction patterns increase cohesion and thus strengthen the power of the group to enforce conformity to norms of prejudice and discrimination. Any factor that makes members more dependent on the group is likely to increase cohesion. Interaction pattern within the ingroup may also increase the economic dependence of members upon each other. Finally, if interaction within each group predominates over interaction across group lines, the development of patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving unique to each group is fostered. Such interaction patterns increase the cultural gulf that separates the two group.

Psychodynamic factors: Researches reveal that a number of psychological factors also give rise to prejudice.

Frustration and Aggression: Frustration also gives rise to prejudice. The underlying theory in it is displaced aggression. According to this theory when individual finds some obstacle between him and his goal he gets frustrated and becomes aggressive toward the obstacle. Since the interfering agent is stronger and powerful and has the power to punish him this frustration and aggression is

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Prejudice and Discrimination

displaced toward some weaker object. Thus, the weak person or group becomes scapegoat.

Authoritarian Personality: Among psychological factors of prejudice authoritarian personality has received much attention from psychologists. People with authoritarian personality exhibit rigid thinking, punitive tendency. These tendencies predispose individual toward prejudice. Besides these people value people on the scale of power, people above them in the power scale are attributed all good characteristics, and people below them on power scale are treated as inferior and deserve to be exploited and hated.

Personality needs: A variety of personality needs may support prejudice and discrimination. One such need is “intolerance for ambiguity”. Persons differ in the extent to which they are disturbed by confusing or ambiguous situations. Some persons like to have everything in black and white i.e. they are unable to tolerate least uncertainty or complexity in situation while some persons are least disturbed by confusing or uncertain situations. In general it has been found that individuals who are more intolerant of ambiguity are also likely to be more prejudiced because prejudice for them serves to clarify ambiguity and uncertainty embedded in the situation. Similarly, a need to achieve superior status may be supported by prejudice, which provides a group of persons lower in status than oneself. The need for security may be satisfied through rejection of outgroup.

Self Assessment Questions

1) What is discrimination?

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2) Delineate the causes for discrimination.

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3) Present the theoretical approaches in regard to maintenance factor of prejudice.

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4) Discuss the causal and maintenance factors of prejudice.

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5) What are situational factors that lead to the development of prejudice and discrimination.

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3.6 MANIFESTATION OF PREJUDICE

As we know that a prejudice is a negative attitude directed toward some member of a particular group. An attitude is a hypothetical construct observable only through the behaviour of a person. A prejudice manifests itself through the following modes of behaviour:

Withdrawal: It means moving from the object of prejudice. For example, a person is prejudiced against Jews. He goes to a party and finds that some Jews have been invited to that party. Now instead of making Jews leave that party he decides to move away from that party.

Avoidance: Keeping away from the social situation where the object of prejudice may be present. For example, the person who is prejudiced against Jews and hates them, comes to know before-hand that some of the invitees at the party are Jews. In that condition he may decide to not to join that party. Thus he is able to avoid a situation where he might have to interact with object of prejudice.

Discrimination: It involves biased behaviour against the object person of prejudice. For example, a teacher who is prejudiced against a particular community may fail students belonging to that community. He may not select students of particular community for school team, although the students in question deserve and merit selection against all criteria.

Lynching: It involves behaviour aimed at causing physical hurt or injury to the object person of prejudice. For example, the teacher in above example may go to the extent of actually subjecting students of a particular community to physical punishment without any reasonable ground.

Extermination: It is an extreme form of manifestation of prejudice. It is aimed at removing the existence of the object person of prejudice. For example, in the Second World War, Hitler, the then Chancellor of Germany, ordered mass extermination of Jews. Millions of Jews were massacred at the orders of Hitler. Hitler believed himself to be Aryan and he aimed to cleanse Germany of Non-Aryans.

3.7 METHODS OF REDUCING PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

Social psychologists have suggested a number of methods for reducing prejudice which as follow:

Intergroup Contact: Allport was the first psychologist to realise the importance of intergroup contact in between prejudiced person and the target person. Such interactional situations provide the two parties an opportunity to know each other from close quarters and understand each other thereby reducing misunderstandings and misconceptions. However, for intergroup contact to be effective certain conditions are to be met.

Intergroup contact is an effective method of reducing prejudice only in those conditions where both the parties have equal status.

For this technique to be effective contact between the prejudiced person and target person ought to be intimate and not superficial. Intimate and honest contact between the concerned parties motivates the person to perceive members of target group more as humans than as stereotypes.

Intergroup contact method is more successful in situations where the success of both parties is dependent on each other i.e. when a common goal is to be achieved. In such situation both parties are forced to understand each other in a better manner.

Education: Social psychologists emphasise that appropriate education has important role to play in reduction of prejudice, particularly racial prejudice. In it both informal and formal education are important. As far as informal education is concerned parents ought to be encouraged not to indulge before children in things which knowingly or unknowingly promote prejudice.

As for formal education, its syllabus and curriculum should be designed to promote harmony between different sections of society. It should aim at developing healthy minds. It has been found that higher and better formal education leads to decreased prejudice and increased liberalism.

Recently, psychologists have devised a new method called *cultural assimilator*. In this method a group of prejudice persons is explained about traditions, norms, beliefs and value system of people of other communities and races so that they can appreciate those communities and races in the light of recent information. A number of social psychologists have successfully used this method.

Antiprejudice propaganda: Through mass media it has also been helpful in reducing prejudice. In one of the studies it was found that films and documentaries aimed at reducing prejudice have been successful in reducing prejudice upto 60 percent. Some other psychologists have reported antiprejudice propaganda to be more effective than formal education.

Incongruent role: It has been found that when a person is made to play a role contrary to his prejudice it leads to reduction in prejudice after some time. It happens because playing such role creates dissonance in the individual. This dissonance gives rise to tension compelling the individual to change his prejudice

and restore balance between his behaviour and attitude. The person can't change his behaviour as it is public but his prejudice. For example, if a person prejudiced against a particular community is entrusted the task of welfare of that community, he is left with no alternative but change his prejudice because he is not able to change his role.

Social legislation: This is another method of reducing prejudice. Government in different countries have adopted and enacted several legislations which prohibit expression of prejudice in any form. Any public manifestation of prejudice is unlawful and liable to punishment. Let us take the example of our own country.

Our constitution states that state shall not make any discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, sex, and religion of the individual and no person shall be allowed to do so. Consequently, today we don't mind a harijan sitting beside us and offering prayer in the temple. Government even encourages people for intercaste marriages. Persons belonging to deprived communities or castes have been provided reservation in jobs.

Personality change techniques: This is for prejudice reduction to be effective a person must have balanced personality and open mind. However in cases where prejudice is an integral part of personality it becomes imperative to seek help of therapeutic treatment. A number of psychotherapies have been developed to help such persons. For example, Play therapy is an important tool for detecting prejudice at early stage and to bring reformation in personality of children.

Self Assessment Questions

1) How do prejudice and discrimination manifest themselves?

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2) How can social legislation reduce prejudice and discrimination

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3) What are the personality change techniques that could reduce prejudice and discrimination?

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3.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we studied prejudice and its nature. What are the different types of prejudices and what havoc they play with society and individual. We also studied characteristics of prejudice. Then we studied discrimination, what does it mean and we also discussed prejudice and discrimination. It was followed by a detailed discussion on the causes of development and maintenance of prejudice. We studied manifestation of prejudice. In the last we discussed methods of reducing prejudice.

3.9 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you understand by the term prejudice? What are the different types of prejudice?
- 2) What do you understand by the term discrimination? What are the different forms of prejudice manifestation?
- 3) Write an essay on factors of development and maintenance of discrimination and prejudice.
- 4) Discuss the psychological factors that give rise to prejudice and discrimination
- 5) Explain how authoritarian personality and personality needs contribute to the development of prejudice and discrimination?

3.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

Aronson, E., Wilson, T. D., & Akert, R. M. (2010). *Social Psychology* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Crisp, R. J., & Turner, R. N. (2010). *Essential Social Psychology* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

UNIT 4 SOCIAL CONFLICT AND ITS RESOLUTION

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Nature of Social Conflict
- 4.3 Forms of Social Conflict
 - 4.3.1 Overt Conflict
 - 4.3.2 Objective Conflict
 - 4.3.3 Subjective Conflict
- 4.4 Methods of Conflict Resolution
- 4.5 Blake and Mouton Strategies
- 4.6 Two Dimensional Model
- 4.7 Group Conflict in Indian Society
- 4.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.9 Unit End Questions
- 4.10 Suggested Readings

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Any society be it Indian, British, American or Japanese is composed of different institutions and groups of people. These groups constituting the society have their own distinct identity. Besides, these groups have their own agenda to pursue. Further no nation or society has resources to meet the demands of all groups and stay in harmony. Consequently these groups while pursuing their goals often find themselves at logger heads to exploit scarce resources and maximise their gains or outcomes. Thus a social situation develops where different groups constituting the society are opposing each other to promote their own interest at the cost of others. This social phenomenon is termed social conflict or group conflict by sociologists, Psychologist and Anthropologists. Social conflict is also evident when one social group compares its gains and feels that it is being marginalised by other groups or when it perceives that it is being deprived of what is duly available to other groups in the society. In this unit we will be dealing with nature and definition of social conflict, the types and forms of social conflict the methods of resolution of the conflicts and we will be presenting the group conflict in Indian society.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

On completing this unit you, will be able to:

- 1 Define and describe social conflict;
- 1 Explain in your own words different types of social conflict;
- 1 Analyse the implications of social conflict on the lives of people;

- 1 Describe the different methods of conflict resolution; and
- 1 Analyse the different types of social conflict affecting Indian society.

4.2 NATURE OF SOCIAL CONFLICT

Social conflict or group conflict occurs when two or more actors oppose each other in social interaction, reciprocally exerting social power in an effort to attain scarce or incompatible goals and prevent the opponent from attaining them.

Group conflict or social conflict is a social relationship wherein the action is oriented intentionally for carrying out the actor's own will against the resistance of other party or parties.

If we analyse the above definitions following conclusions can be drawn:

Social conflict revolves around social power. In almost all kinds of social conflict struggle to get hold of power is central. Access to power or hold over power ensures a group's success in attaining its goal. Consequently the powerful group wins and the weaker one loses the competition. For example, the recent Gurjar movement in Rajasthan to get entry into scheduled tribes club was thwarted by Meenas, another tribe of Rajasthan.

This could be possible only because Meenas have proliferated in highest services of India and today they enjoy tremendous political, bureaucratic, and economic clout. This access to power has made them formidable. Therefore, they successfully thwarted Gurjars' attempt to share tribal status with and take a part of the cake of reservation from them.

Social conflict involves incompatibility in the sense that in social conflict some people are able to get what they want while others fail to get what they want. Thus for some their want remains an unfulfilled desire and they keep seething with discontent. This incompatibility once created develops into a vicious cycle which is broken only when some strong social reform movement takes place.

For example, for centuries people belonging to Harijan community were being maltreated by the so-called upper class Hindus. They could raise their voice against it only when people like Mahatma Gandhi, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Jyotiba Phule took cudgel against it and it converted into a movement of self-respect for Harijans that it was realised that these people need to be given fair treatment. Even then only a small dent could be made in the existing situation.

Mostly social situations are such that not all individuals in it have similar or identical interests. Every person participating in social interaction tries to maximise his gain at the expense of other person involved. This situation invariably leads to struggle to win and keeping others from goal. However, it is impossible to find a social situation which can be described as pure group conflict like struggle between two warring teams of football. In most social conflict situations element of cooperation is intertwined along with competition.

4.3 FORMS OF SOCIAL CONFLICT

A social conflict may take different forms and manifest itself in different manners. However, psychologists have identified three different forms of social conflict which are as follow:

4.3.1 Overt Conflict

In this form social conflict is open and explicit. Competition between both the parties is fierce and direct. For example, negotiation between management representatives and labour union or war between two countries. A more simple example of it is debate, in which one speaker emphasises and justifies his own point while questioning the validity of opponents point of view. The explicit aim is to defeat the opponent and ensure ones victory.

4.3.2 Objective Conflict

Objective conflict occurs when one group tries to gain advantage over another group or groups. Thus by objective social conflict we mean a social situation inherently benefits some while causing loss to others. For example, it is often seen that when government takes some welfare steps, some people are more benefitted but some others receive less than expected benefits and still some others are at loss. This gives rise to a kind of social conflict known as objective social conflict.

Let us take the case reservation in jobs. OBC were given a quota of 27 % in Government jobs and this category included in it numerous castes. However, only a few of the dominant castes in OBC category— Jats, Ahir, Kurmy and Kumawat— were able to garner majority of the share in OBC quota and other castes like Gurjar, Luhars etc. could not reap much benefit. Result was that slowly members of these castes started feeling left out and began to clammer for a separate quota for them. Recent Gurjar movement for inclusion in the scheduled tribe category was a result of such objective conflict because Gurjars were not able to compete with Jats and Ahirs in the OBC category and could not obtain equal benefit.

4.3.3 Subjective Conflict

When a person identifies or perceives a situation involving struggle it is known as subjective conflict. Sometimes a person remains in a state of subjective struggle without bringing it to overt level.

Self Assessment Questions

1) Define the Nature of social conflict.

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2) Describe the nature of social conflict.

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3) What are the forms of social conflict ?

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4) Describe overt conflict

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5) How is objective conflict different from subjective conflict?

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4.4 METHODS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Like any other problem Social psychologists have developed number of approaches for resolution of social conflict. Some of the main methods as follow:

Mutually beneficial goal: A common approach to ameliorate social conflict is to establish mutually beneficial goals. Such goals prompt the warring parties to work in close cooperation and help reduce feelings of group struggle. In a classical experiment Sherif and Sherif put two groups in a social situation which involved competition between the two parties. It was observed that very soon they developed feelings of animosity and competition. Things reached to a level where both parties raided each other's camps to hurt and damage their prospects of attaining goal. In the next phase of the experiment both the warring parties were put in a situation which called for joint efforts to reach the goal. Since neither of them had sufficient resources to attain goal on their own, they were left with no alternative but to help each other to surmount problems faced by them. Not longer than before it was observed that members of both parties began trying to understand each other's concerns. They started seeing members of opposite group very often and appreciated each other's approach to handle problems. Thus by the end of the experiment both the groups had developed better understanding of each other and there was a marked reduction in feeling of conflict.

Compromise: Reaching a compromise between the two parties also leads to reduction of struggle. Compromise is a situation where no party stands to gain or lose anything. Thus it gradually leads to reduction in struggle. For example, when Gurjars in Rajasthan pressurised the government for inclusion into scheduled tribes, the Meenas vehemently opposed their demand since they have been the

biggest gainer in Rajasthan. This conflict led to open war between them and resulted in many casualties and bloodshed. Now that location of both communities is such that they are found living side by side almost all over Rajasthan, they soon realised the futility of opposing each other. A compromise was struck between the two and an understanding was arrived at under which gurjars dropped their demand for inclusion into scheduled tribe but asked for a separate quota for themselves and Meenas agreed to support Gurjars demand. Thus under the new agreement both parties stood to gain or lose nothing at the cost of each other.

Developing special norms: Conflict between two warring factions or groups may be reduced through development of special norms. For example, in a game, the question of who will take first turn may be settled by leaving it to the umpire. Thus the bone of contention is removed and thereby the cause of conflict is removed. Psychologists have delineated social conditions, on the basis of studies, where conflict and struggle can be handled through developing special norms. According to them social conditions where in both the parties have the ability and will to influence each other lend themselves to such interventions. This technique has reportedly been successfully used in a number of situations with different communities.

Prosocial behavior: By prosocial behaviour we mean behavior that creates some kind of positive social influence among others. For example, giving charity, working for the welfare of others, helping others in distress are some of the forms of prosocial behaviour. Studies reveal that when members of a community engage in some kind of prosocial behaviour toward members of other community it has direct impact on their perception and opinion about them and results significantly in the reduction of feelings of conflict and struggle.

Psychologists observed that when an individual engages in prosocial behaviour, that is when a person is involved in helping a person in distress, the person passes through four stages:

- 1) First, the individual takes stock of the seriousness of the condition or situation in which help is to be given.
- 2) Second, the individual takes responsibility for the helping another person.
- 3) Third, the individual enters a state where he wishes to help the person in distress and
- 4) Finally the person recognises the fact that the individual is capable of helping another person.

Use of scientific approaches: Social psychologists suggested some scientific approaches for reduction of group conflict, which is as follows:

a) Win-Lose approach b) Lose-Lose approach c) Lose-Win approach. Let us describe these approaches:

Win-Lose approach – In this type of approach one party or group adopts different methods, means and approaches aimed at ensuring defeat of opponent party and victory for themselves. In other words, one group tries to thwart another group from reaching the target or goal so that they can reach the goal. This approach has two underlying assumptions: that is (i) conflict among people

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is inevitable and unanimity is impossible. (ii) gain of one party results is loss for the other party . In other words, only one party can win or reach the goal and another party is bound to fail in the process. In such situations, conflicts do arise. Now that conflict is inevitable and there can only be one winner, the best technique or approach is leaving no stone unturned to ensure defeat of opponents and victory for self.

Success can be achieved using socially acceptable means like exercising our democratic rights and also to some extent by using subversive methods like threatening the opponents of dire consequences, making opponent allies cross over the fence by luring them with different types of benefits or even taking recourse to unlawful activities as advocated. Thus in nutshell this approach advocates putting in exercise the age old aphorism that every thing is fair in love and war. It is the end that matters the most and not the means employed to achieve the end.

Lose-Lose approach – This approach is called lose-lose approach because none of the parties involved in the struggle stand to gain much and are not able to cause what they wanted to happen. Underlying assumptions of this approach are:

- i) Some thing is better than nothing.
- ii) It is better to stay away from struggle than indulging in it and wasting resources.
- iii) When groups reconcile with each other after initial bouts of struggle the lose-lose approach is exemplified.
- iv) Another characteristic of this approach is that it results in quick solution of the problem and values and motives of individuals do not find place.

Win-Win approach: This approach is different from the above two approaches mentioned earlier. This is considered ideal for reduction of struggle between warring groups. It involves both parties resorting to different types of cooperative measures and techniques to arrive at a conscious solution of the struggle so that all the concerned parties are benefitted to the maximum.

Underlying assumption in this approach is that it considers struggle as a mutual problem which can be solved amicably. It lays emphasis on the difficulties and problems of both parties and not on the means of ensuring victory. Both parties sit together and work on the solution of the problem and whosoever reaches the solution first acquaints the other party. Thus the solution arrived at is acceptable to all concerned. However successful application of this approach requires skill in human relations otherwise it is difficult to achieve success using this approach.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) What is meant by mutually beneficial goal?

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2) Define and describe “compromising” as a conflict resolution strategy.

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3) What type of special norms will you develop for conflict resolution?

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4) Can pro social behavior be used for resolution of conflict? Explain

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5) What are the various scientific approaches for reducing conflict?

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4.5 BLAKE AND MOUTON STRATEGIES

Blake & Mouton on the basis of their research stated that people adopt one of the following five strategies for reduction of conflict and struggle which are given below:

Withdrawing: In this the person resolves the problem by stepping back from the situation of struggle (lose-lose approach).

Smoothing: This comprises of putting emphasis on points of common interests and avoiding discussion on matters of debate or controversy. Thus this approach tries to minimize differences between the two warring factions (lose-lose approach).

Compromising: This strategy seeks to decrease differences through discussion (lose-lose approach).

Forcing: This approach is an all or none approach in that it takes a competitive stand. It is this way or that way approach (win-lose approach).

Confrontation and problem solving: Both parties openly discuss all matters and the best mutually acceptable solution is accepted (win-win approach)

4.6 TWO DIMENSIONAL MODEL

This model presumes that all sorts of conflict handling behaviour can be understood in terms of two dimensions i.e. assertiveness and cooperation. These two basic dimensions of behaviour define five different modes for responding to conflict situations:

Competing is assertive and uncooperative—an individual pursues his own concerns at the other person's expense. This is a power-oriented mode in which you use whatever power seems appropriate to win your own position—your ability to argue, your rank, or economic sanctions. Competing means “standing up for your rights,” defending a position which you believe is correct, or simply trying to win.

Accommodating is unassertive and cooperative—the complete opposite of competing. When accommodating, the individual neglects his own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this mode. Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when you would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.

Avoiding is unassertive and uncooperative—the person neither pursues his own concerns nor those of the other individual. Thus he does not deal with the conflict. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time, or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation.

Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative—the complete opposite of avoiding. Collaborating involves an attempt to work with others to find some solution that fully satisfies their concerns. It means digging into an issue to pinpoint the underlying needs and wants of the two individuals. Collaborating between two persons might take the form of exploring a disagreement to learn from each other's insights or trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem.

Compromising is moderate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. It falls intermediate between competing and accommodating. Compromising gives up more than competing but less than accommodating. Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding, but does not explore it in as much depth as collaborating. In some situations, compromising might mean splitting the difference between the two positions, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground solution.

Each of us is capable of using all five conflict-handling modes. None of us can be characterised as having a single style of dealing with conflict. But certain people use some modes better than others and, therefore, tend to rely on those modes more heavily than others—whether because of temperament or practice.

Third party intervention Another way of resolving group conflict is to seek mediation of an arbitrator or third party. This third party tries to arrive at a solution keeping in view the characteristics of the warring factions. Solution generated by the third party is binding on all the concerned parties. A good feature of this type of resolution is that the third party does not enforce a decision but the decision is arrived at through open discussion and negotiation over points of problems. However, this approach requires third party to be very mature and adept at human relations.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Describe in detail what Blake and Mouton strategies involve in conflict resolution?

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- 2) Discuss the two dimensional model in conflict resolution.

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- 3) What is meant by third party intervention and how does it help in resolving the conflict?

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4.7 GROUP CONFLICT IN INDIAN SOCIETY

Tribal problems In Indian society tribal groups have a special place. They represent minority communities and always emphasise on keeping their independent existence. These tribes think that assimilation with majority population would jeopardize their separate identity. Formation of state of Jharkhand out of Bihar exemplifies this attitude of tribals.

Caste conflict India is conglomeration of castes which can broadly be divided into three categories, that is the forward castes, backward castes and scheduled castes and tribes. These castes always show an inclination to outsmart each other.

Communal problems Since independence India has been plagued with communal problem between Hindus and Muslims. This has witnessed innumerable bloody riots between the people of two religions and cost thousands of innocent lives and millions of dollars worth property.

Demolition of Babri Masjid is a blatant example of conflict between these two communities.

Other social conflict problems are— labour management problems, student problems, landlord-tenant problem, confrontation between advantaged and disadvantaged class, language problem and job problem etc.

4.8 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we studied the nature of social conflict. We tried to understand various elements involved in it. We also studied different types of social conflict and their implications on the life of people in the society. This was followed by a detailed discussion on methods of conflict resolution. Now we understand different approaches taken to resolve social conflict and the rationale behind them.

4.9 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Discuss social conflict and various forms of social conflict in detail.
- 2) Throw light on various approaches to conflict resolution.
- 3) Discuss in detail different types social conflict that plague India and suggest approaches for their resolution.

4.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

Arrow, Kenneth J.(1995). *Barriers to Conflict Resolution*. W.W. Norton. NY

Burton, John W. and Frank Dukes.(1990). *Conflict: Readings in Management and Resolution*. St. Martin's Press. NY

UNIT 1 INTRODUCTION TO GROUP, FORMATION AND TYPES OF GROUP

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Objectives
- 1.2 Definition and Meaning of Group
- 1.3 Important Features of Group
- 1.4 Characteristics of a Group
- 1.5 Group Formation and Related Theories
 - 1.5.1 Theories of Group Formation
 - 1.5.2 Ten (10) Rules that Govern Groups
- 1.6 Types of Group
- 1.7 Group Structure
- 1.8 Group Conflict
- 1.9 Group Behaviour and Group Action
- 1.10 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.11 Unit End Questions
- 1.12 Glossary
- 1.13 Suggested Readings and References

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit deals with groups, their definition and description. Also the unit describes how groups are formed, types of groups and their structure and theories of group formation. The unit provides information on basic aspects concerning groups and their formation.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- 1 define the meaning of group;
- 1 explain the characteristics of group;
- 1 describe the formation and theories of group;
- 1 analyse the types of groups; and
- 1 explain the importance and functions of the structure of group.

1.2 DEFINITION AND MEANING OF GROUP

Everyone knows what a group is in general. When two persons or more come together and interact at one place it may be called a group. The group may be defined in various ways. Given below are a few important definitions of group and each of these definitions emphasises one or the other important features of the group.

- 1) R.M. Williams (1951) “A social group is a given aggregate of people playing inter-related roles and recognised by themselves or other as a unit of interaction.” Here it can be said group is an aggregate of some people. The roles of the group members are inter-related. The group is considered as unit.
- 2) R.M. MacIver (1953) “By group we mean any collection of social beings who enter into distinctive social relationships with one another.” It is clear that there must be social relationships between the individual members of a group.
- 3) David (1968) “A social psychological group is an organised system of two or more individuals who are interrelated so that the system performs some functions, has a standard set of the role relationship among its members and has a set of norms that regulate the function of the group and each of its members.”
- 4) Kretch, Crutchfield and Ballachy (1962) defined psychological group “as two or more persons who meet the following conditions : (i) the relations among the members are independent, each member’s behaviour influences the behaviour of each of the others, (ii) the members ‘share on ideology’ – a set of beliefs, values and norms which regulate their mutual conduct.”
- 5) Paulus (1989) “A group consists of two or more interacting persons who share common goals, have a stable relationship, are somehow interdependent and perceive that they are in fact part of a group.” Here we can say that individuals interact with each other, either directly or indirectly. Besides this, the group members are interdependent in some manner, i.e., what happens to one must affect what happens to the others. Not only this, their relationship must be relatively stable. The members of the group involve to attain the goals and their interaction will be in a structured form so that, each group member performs the same or more or less similar functions each time they meet. Finally, it can be said that the individuals involved in a group must recognise that they are part of a group.

The word “group” has many meanings. Generally we use the term ‘group’ keeping in mind three main points:

- i) where a number of persons are sitting or working together. The essential thing is the physical proximity of a number of people being together at a given time with or without any common purpose;
- ii) where persons are classified as belonging to an association. Sometimes it is seen that people may have no relationship with each other but they have some common characteristics and we classify them as a group;
- iii) where persons belong to an organisation. This group has definite structure, and people in this group have a sense of belongingness to the given organisation

Children and Group

A child's social development takes place gradually as the child advances in age. To fulfill physical needs, children perform many functions. They exhibit signs of reacting to individuals who they identify as fulfilling their needs. Then they start understanding objects and individuals in their environment. As children grow older their patterns of play and other activities also change considerably. The feelings of "I" and "MINE" and then "YOU" and "YOURS" develop. Sharing things, asserting one's rights, co-operation, etc. are learnt by children in the first stage of their socialisation.

Initially they belong to a small world of children, all nearly their own age, although differences may vary with the arrangement in different groups. They are constantly assimilating many things by direct coaching, training, imitation, spontaneous reaction, repeated experience and so on. Living in a group they gradually develop the sentiments, opinion, interests, habits, desires etc. Interaction and communication plays a vital role in this regard.

To know the meaning of the group more clearly you think about all the groups to which you belong, viz., local friends, college friends, music/ dance group and so many. Generally people join in groups due to various needs and these include

- i) Satisfaction of important psychological and social needs, viz., receiving affection and attention, for attaining belongingness.
- ii) Achievement of goal in a smooth and easy way. By working with others, the person performs the task well than doing it alone.
- iii) Getting knowledge and information on various issues which are not available at one place .
- iv) Getting safety and security.

In psychology we define Group as the study of organisations and their behaviour. Psychology studies groups and explores the control of the individual within the group setting. Social, organisational and group psychology are all powerful areas of study that look at many factors that drive group behaviour and the decisions that a group makes. Depending on the group's influence, the group member's individuality is often relinquished for the greater good of the group. It is the role of social psychology to uncover why this release occurs in groups and what effects it has on society.

1.3 IMPORTANT FEATURES OF GROUP

The important features of group are:

- i) One or more individuals come together and influence each other.
- ii) There are social interactions and relationships amongst the individual members of a group.
- iii) There exists some common motives, drives, interests, emotions etc. amongst group members.

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- iv) There is communication among group members, both verbal and or non-verbal.
- v) The group members have some common object of attention and group members stimulate each other.
- vi) They have common loyalty and participate in similar activities.
- vii) There exists feeling of unity in the group. Group members treat each other with respect and regard and has a sense of comradeship that develops among them.
- viii) The action of the members is controlled by the group.
- ix) There are some customs, norms and procedures which are acceptable to everyone but if exception happens, then the particular member will be ostracised from the group.

Self Assessment Questions

1) Define group.

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2) How do children develop and become part of a group?

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3) What are the three main points to define the group?

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4) Write the important features of a group.

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1.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF A GROUP

Suppose you belong to a group where you may observe some special features which you can accept or not. It may be good or bad, healthy or unhealthy,

favourable or unfavourable, but there are certain significant features say the characteristics of the group.

- i) *A sense of we-feeling*: There is a feeling of belongingness among the members of the group. The members of the group help each other in performing their duties. They work collectively against the harmful powers. They treat people who do not belong to the group as outsiders. They always try to make the group self-sufficient.
- ii) *Common interest*: Each and every member of the group has a common interest. There is similarity among the members in regard to their interest which promotes unity. The group includes those persons who are related to each other in such a way that they should be treated as one.
- iii) *A feeling of unity*: Unity is essential for every group. Each and every member of the group treats each other as their own and there develops a sense of camaraderie amongst the members of group.
- iv) *Related to each other*: It is true that members of the group are inter-related. There is a reciprocal communication among the group members. Social relations are the fundamentals of group life.
- v) *Affected by group characteristics*: Every group has some social characteristics which separate it from similar and dissimilar groups. These characteristics affect the members of the group. The nature may be different for different persons, but still all the members are affected by the group
- vi) *Common values*: There are certain values which are common among members and are traditionally respected and communicated to the succeeding generation. They are manifested in the mutual behaviours of the members. Members of the social group are bound together in terms of these common values.
- vii) *Control of group*: In each group there are some customs, norms and procedures which are acceptable to everyone. In fact, without some norms, the existence of group life is impossible. It may be stated that the reasons behind the similarity of behaviours in a group life is that the actions of the members are controlled by the group.
- viii) *Obligation*: In a group situation, all members have complementary obligations to each other. Also the relationships between the members of a group get strengthened through their mutual obligation and common social values.
- ix) *Expectations*: Not only mutual obligation, the members of the group also expects love, compassion, empathy, co-operation etc., from all other members of the group. If mutual expectation is fulfilled, the group members are maintained in tact. A group can maintain its existence only if the constituent members fulfill their responsibility by satisfying the desires among themselves.

Groups are the units of social organisation. Therefore, the integration and disintegration of social organisation are dependent upon the integration or disintegration of the groups. In group, social relationship is a very important factor. The first and foremost social relationship indicates the relationship among the family members. Thus, it can further be said that family is an important social group.

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You are one of the members in your family. You interact with other family members and there is a reciprocal relationship between you and others. Certainly you have 'we feeling' where you belong. Among the family members there are relationships such as husband-wife, father-son, and brother-sister etc. and they all work together for the interests of the family in a mood of mutual co-operation. Each and every member of the family treats the other members as his own and in spite of differences of opinion they have some common ideals and values. It is mainly due to common interest of the members that the group works as a well-knit unit.

As for example we can say that "*school is a social group*". The significant characteristics of the school as a group are:

- 1 All children have a common goal.
- 1 The students and the teacher are motivated for the achievement of a common goal.
- 1 School has an organised structure.
- 1 School offers excellent opportunities for group to realise its needs.

1.5 GROUP FORMATION AND RELATED THEORIES

Group formation is concerned with the following:

- i) The manner in which the groups form
- ii) The structures and processes of the group
- iii) The functions of the group in different situations.

There are mainly five stages of group development, viz., forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning.

- i) **Forming** is a stage which is characterised by some confusion and uncertainty. Forming is actually an orientation period when members get to know one another and share expectations about the group. This is the initial stage when the group comes together and members begin to develop their relationship with one another and learn what is expected of them.
- ii) **Storming** is the stage where one can see the highest level of disagreement and conflict. Members mainly voice their concern, and criticism occurs at this stage. Actually in this stage interpersonal conflicts arise and differences of opinion about the group goals also emerge. It is important to work through the conflicts at this time and to establish clear goals.
- iii) **Norming** is characterised by the recognition of individual differences and shared expectations. Responsibilities are divided among members and the group decides how it will evaluate the progress. If the group resolves its conflicts, it can establish patterns of how to get its work done. Expectations of one another are clearly articulated and accepted by members of the group.

- iv) **Performing** occurs when the group has matured and attains a feeling of cohesiveness. In this stage, members of the group make decision through a rational process that is focused on relevant goals rather than emotional issues. Issues related to roles, expectations and norms are no longer of major importance. The group is focused on its tasks, working effectively to accomplish its goals.
- v) **Adjourning** indicates that members of the group often experience feelings of closure and sadness as they prepare to leave. It is the final stage when the group, after achieving the objectives for which it was created, starts to gradually dissolve itself.

Thus, group is a collection of individuals. Group refers to two or more persons who interact with one another, share common goals and recognise that they belong to a group. Groups help us to satisfy important psychological needs and social needs. Different persons perform different types of tasks. Group may choose a person to serve as a leader and other persons as followers. There is a link among the members. Not only this, interaction among the group members is very important for smooth running of the activities of the group.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Define common interest and common values as characteristics of a group.

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- 2) What are the five stages of group development?

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1.5.1 Theories of Group Formation

Theories are establishing hypothesis which explain a particular phenomenon. Many theories may explain one phenomenon, as for instances “delinquency”. There are psychological, biological and sociological themes which explain delinquency.

On the same lines as above there are many theories which explain how groups are formed and how they develop and progress. There are several theories regarding group formation and development. The theories put forward here include classic theory, social exchange and social identity theory.

- i) *Classic Theory*: A classic theory, developed by George Homans suggests that groups develop on the basis of activities, interactions and sentiments mainly. Basically, this theory indicates that when individuals share common activities they will have more interaction and will develop attitudes (either positive or

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negative) toward each other. The main element is the interaction of the individuals involved.

- ii) *Social Exchange Theory*: Another important theory is the social exchange theory which offers an alternative explanation for group development. According to this theory individuals form the relationship on the basis of implicit expectation of mutually beneficial exchanges based on trust and felt obligation. It can further be said that a perception that exchange relationships will be positive if persons are to be attracted to and affiliate with a group.
- iii) *Social Identity Theory*: Besides this, another important theory is social identity theory which offers explanation for group formation. This theory suggests that individuals get a sense of identity and self-esteem based on their membership in salient groups. The group is demographically, culturally and organisationally based.

One of the most important activities that groups perform is decision-making. This is the process through which individuals or groups combine and integrate information from several possible actions. Most people believe that the group by utilising the expertise and knowledge of their members and also by avoiding extreme course of action usually reaches better decisions than what individuals can accomplish simply.

During the decision period, members convey a wide range of views. Generally, social decision take place in two phases as given below:

- i) The first phase is discussion, which mainly helps to confirm or strengthen the most popular view, which rarely gets reversed; and
- ii) The second phase is the correct situation or decision which ultimately emerges in the forefront.

Besides the above two, there are several aspects of the group's procedure, which includes: (i) following of procedures (ii) addressing its managing interactions among members and so on. Some persons, knowing about the opinions, especially the influential members, incline to join the majority and thereby tilt the decision in the required direction.

1.5.2 Ten (10) Rules that Govern Groups

Much of our lives are spent in groups with other people. We form groups to socialise, earn money, play sport, make music, even to change the world. But although groups are diverse, many of the psychological processes involved are remarkably similar.

Here are 10 insightful rules that give indication of what has been discovered about the dynamics of group psychology.

Rule1. Groups can arise from almost nothing

The desire to form and join social groups is extremely powerful and built into our nature. Amongst other things groups give us a very valuable gift that is our social identity, which contributes to our sense of who we are.

Just how readily people form and join groups is demonstrated by Tajfel et al. (1971) in the so-called '*minimal groups paradigm*'. In their study boys who were strangers to each other were given only the slightest hint that they were being split into two groups. Even without knowing or seeing who else was in their group they favoured members of their own group over the others. Group behaviour, then, can arise from almost nothing.

Rule 2. Initiation rites improve group evaluations

Existing groups do not let others join for free: the cost is sometimes monetary, sometimes intellectual, and sometimes physical—but usually there is an initiation rite, even if it's well disguised.

Aronson and Mills (1959) tested the effect of initiation rites by making one group of women read passages from sexually explicit novels. Afterwards they rated the group they had joined much more positively than those who had not had to undergo the humiliating initiation. So, not only do groups want to test you, but they want you to value your membership.

Rule 3. Groups breed conformity

After joining a group and being initiated, we have to get a feel for the group norms, the rules of behaviour in that group. Group norms can be extremely powerful, bending our behaviours in ways we would never expect.

One of the most famous experiments showing how easily we conform to unwritten group rules was conducted by Asch (1951). He had participants sit amongst a group of other people, who were judging the length of a line. The trick was that all the other members of the group were confederates of the experimenter who had been told to lie about which line was longer. Incredibly 76% of participants denied the evidence from their own senses at least once, just to conform with the group. Afterwards people made up all kinds of excuses for their behaviour. Most popular was a variation on: "that many people can not be wrong".

Rule 4. Learn the ropes or be ostracised

Group norms are extremely pervasive. This becomes all the more obvious when we start breaking them. Garfinkel (1967) had adolescents return to their families and behave totally out of character, that is, speaking only when spoken to, being polite, acting formally, etc. But all this was to be only for 15 minutes at a time. Rather than being delighted their parents were shocked and angry, accusing their children of being selfish and rude. Break the group's rules and you'll know about it soon enough.

Rule 5. You become your job

Although groups have norms and it is known that rules apply to everyone in the group. People have roles within groups and corresponding rules that apply to justify their position. The most well known demonstrations of the power of roles is the *Stanford Prison Experiment*. Let us see what this experiment was.

Psychologists put young men into a simulated prison environment, making some of them as prisoners and some others as guards (Zimbardo, 1972). After only 6 of its planned 14 days, the experiment had to be stopped because participants conformed all too well to their roles as submissive prisoners or domineering

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guards. Some were emotionally disturbed by the experience. Even the experimenters were succumbing to their 'roles' as prison superintendents before the whole experiment was suspended.

Rule 6. Leaders gain trust by conforming

A high-profile, high-status role in any group is that of its leader, but where do leaders come from? In some groups, they are appointed or imposed from outside, but in many groups leaders emerge slowly and subtly from the ranks.

A study that has much to teach was carried out by Merei (1949) who observed children at a Hungarian nursery school. He noticed that successful leaders were those who initially fitted in with the group then slowly began to suggest new activities adapted from the old. Children did not follow potential leaders who jumped straight in with new ideas. Leaders first conform, then only later, when trust has been gained, can they be confident that others will follow. This has been confirmed in later studies (with grown-ups!).

Rule 7. Groups can improve performance

The mere presence of others can make us perform better. Norman Triplett, the pioneer of Social psychology noticed that racing cyclists with a pacemaker covered each mile about 5 seconds quicker than those without (Triplett, 1898). Later research found this was not *all* about the effects of competition. The presence of other people seems to facilitate our own performance, but more so when the task is relatively separate from that of others and can be judged on its own merits.

Rule 8. People will loaf

In other circumstances, though, people in groups demonstrate a tremendous capacity for loafing, it was found in the 1890s by a researcher that participants in a tug of war only put in half as much effort when they were in a team of 8 than when they were on their own. It seems that hiding in the group is easy, for example when tasks are additive and each person's contribution is difficult to judge, people will slack off to a considerable extent.

Rule 9. The grapevine is 80% accurate

Intelligence, rumour, gossip and tittle-tattle is the lifeblood of many groups. It travels at a tremendous pace in big organisations because people love a good bit of gossip, but what are 'they' talking about and can you believe what 'they' say? Simmons (1985) analysed workplace communication and found that about 80% of the time people are talking about work and a surprising 80% of the information was accurate.

Rule 10. Groups breed competition

While co-operation *within* group members is generally not so much of a problem, co-operation *between* groups can be problematic. People may be individually cooperative, but once put in a 'them-and-us' situation, these rapidly become remarkably adversarial.

Self Assessment Questions

1) What are the basic characteristics of feeling of unity and control of group?

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2) What are the five stages of group development?

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3) Elucidate group formation theory.

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4) Elucidate the rules of the group.

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1.6 TYPES OF GROUP

We can classify groups in different ways. First, it can be divided into two main parts considering the degree of intimacy as the basis of classification.

- 1 **Primary group:** There is an intimate face-to-face relationship among the members and the members are having 'we feeling' to the maximum. Family, play groups and village community come under this category.
- 1 **Secondary group:** Here the relationships are more or less casual and marked by common interest. Clubs, trade unions etc. are under this category.
- 1 **In-group/ we group:** Here we identify ourselves with that group which has a common object and common interest. They have a sense of 'we' feeling. The members of the in groups treat others as outsiders. These groups can be formed on the basis of relationship, same country, similar political interests and economic interests etc.
- 1 **Out-group:** It is the group in which the members are considered as outsiders by us. Groups other than the in-group are generally called out-groups.

Group Dynamics

On the basis of norms and rules, groups can be categorised into the following types:

- 1 **Formal group:** It is generally formed on the basis of specific norms, rules and values. The group of students in a classroom comes under the category of formal group. So, school is one of the formal group settings.
- 1 **Informal group:** The nature of the group is not formed at all. The rules are usually flexible. Play groups, peer group and social clubs etc. are examples of informal groups.

Besides the above two, group can also classified into various categories as given below:

- 1 **Organised groups:** The groups which are formed for specific purpose and are carefully planned is called organised groups. The family, the school etc. are also called organised groups.
- 1 **Spontaneous groups:** The groups are formed without any careful planning. Audience may be considered as spontaneous group after listening to the speech by a renowned speaker.
- 1 **Command groups:** Command groups are specified by the organisational chart. It consists of a supervisor and the subordinates that report to the supervisor.
- 1 **Task groups:** A group of people work together to achieve a common task. In many situations there is a specified time period. This can be referred to as task forces.
- 1 **Functional groups:** Functional group is generally created by the organisation to accomplish specific goals within an unspecified time frame. Functional group generally exists after achievement of current goals and objects.
- 1 **Interest groups:** It usually continues over time and may last longer than general informal groups. It is seen that the interest of the member may not be part of the same organisational department but they are bound by some common interest.
- 1 **Friendship groups:** It may be of different types. These groups are formed by the members who enjoy similar social activities, political beliefs, religious values and other common bonds.
- 1 **Reference groups:** This is the group where the people evaluate themselves. Reference groups have a strong influence on members' behaviour.

Temporary Group: Studies indicate that temporary groups come together for a certain purpose and disburse after the task is over. These groups have their own unique sequencing of actions. *The salient features are:*

- i) Their first meeting sets the group's direction.
- ii) The first phase of group activity is one of inertia.
- iii) A transition takes place at the end of this first phase, which occurs exactly when the group has used up half its allotted time.
- iv) A transition initiates major changes.

- v) A second phase of inertia follows the transition.
- vi) The group's last meeting is characterised by markedly accelerated activity.

There are other types of groups, a few of which are listed below:

Clique: An informal, tight-knit group, usually in a High School/College setting, that shares common interests. There is an established yet shifty power structure in most *Cliques*. The effects of *Cliques* are varied.

Club: A club is a group, which usually requires one to apply to become a member. Such clubs may be dedicated to particular activities, such as sports clubs.

Community: A community is a group of people with a commonality or sometimes a complex net of overlapping commonalities, often, but not always, in proximity with one another with some degree of continuity over time. They often have some organisation and leaders.

Franchise: This is an organisation which runs several instances of a business in many locations.

Gang: A gang is usually an urban group that gathers in a particular area. It is a group of people that often hang around each other. They can be like some clubs, but much less formal.

Group: A group is a basic term for a number of people that associate themselves with each other. This is a basic term which has many uses.

Mob: A mob is usually a group of people that has taken the law into their own hands. Mobs are usually a group which gathers temporarily for a particular reason.

Posse: A posse was initially an American term for a group of citizens that had banded together to enforce the law. However, it can also refer to a street group.

Squad: This is usually a small group, of around 3-8 people, that would work as a team to accomplish a certain goal.

Team: This is similar to a squad, though a team may contain many more members. A team works in a similar way as a squad.

1.7 GROUP STRUCTURE

It refers to the pattern of interrelationship that exists among group members and makes the group's functioning orderly. The important aspects of group structure are:

- i) **Role:** Role or the typical part played by an individual group member in accordance with the expectations of other members from him.
- ii) **Norms:** Norms are the rules and mutual expectations that develop within the group. Norms have profound effect on members' behaviour as it ensures conformity among them.
- iii) **Status:** Status is the relative prestige or social position given to groups or individuals by others.

Group Dynamics

- iv) **Group cohesiveness:** It refers to the degree of attraction to the group members for each other and the “we feeling” among the members. Without proper group structure, group can not function properly in any situation.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) What are the important aspects of group structure?

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- 2) Define norms and status as an aspect of group structure.

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- 3) What do we call the groups formed on the basis of norms and rules?

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- 4) Enumerate the different types of groups.

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1.8 GROUP CONFLICT

Group conflicts, also called group intrigues, is where social behaviour causes groups of individuals to conflict with each other. It can also refer to a conflict within these groups. This conflict is often caused by differences in social norms, values, and religion.

Both constructive and destructive conflict occurs in most small groups. It is very important to accentuate the constructive conflict and minimise the destructive conflict. Conflict is bound to happen, but if we use it constructively then it need not be a bad thing.

When destructive conflict is used in small groups, it is counterproductive to the long term goal. It is much like poisoning the goose that lays the golden eggs. In the case of small group communication, destructive conflict creates hostility between

the members. This poisons group synergy and the results, the golden eggs if you will, either cease being produced or are at least inferior in quality.

Using constructive conflict within small groups has the opposite effect. It is much like nourishing the goose so that it continues to produce the golden eggs, golden eggs which may be even better than what the unnourished goose could have produced. In this sense, bringing up problems and alternative solutions while still valuing others in small groups allows the group to work forward. (Engleberg & Wynn, 2007)

1.9 GROUP BEHAVIOUR AND GROUP ACTION

Group behaviour refers to the situations where people interact in large or small groups. The field of group dynamics deals with small groups that may reach consensus and act in a coordinated way.

Groups of a large number of people in a given area may act simultaneously (herd behaviour) to achieve a goal that differs from what individuals would do acting alone. A large group (a crowd or mob) is likely to show examples of group behaviour when people gathered in a given place and time act in a similar way—for example, joining a protest or march, participating in a fight or acting patriotically.

Special forms of large group behaviour are:

- 1) Crowd “hysteria”
- 2) Spectators: when a group of people gathered together on purpose to participate in an event like theatre, play, cinema, movie, football, match, a concert, etc.
- 3) Public: exception to the rule that the group must occupy the same physical place. People watching same channel on television may react in the same way, as they are occupying the same type of place in front of television although they may physically be doing this all over the world.

Group behaviour differs from mass actions which refers to people behaving similarly on a more global scale (for example, shoppers in different shops), while group behaviour refers usually to people in one place. If the group behaviour is coordinated, then it is called group action. Swarm intelligence is a special case of group behaviour, referring to the interaction between a group of agents in order to fulfil a given task. This type of group dynamics has received much attention by the soft computing community in the form of the particle swarm optimisation family of algorithms.

Group action is a situation in which a large number of agents take action simultaneously in order to achieve a common goal; their actions are usually coordinated. Group action will often take place when social agents realise they are more likely to achieve their goal when acting together rather than individually. Group action differs from group behaviours, which are uncoordinated, and also from mass actions, which are more limited in place.

1.10 LET US SUM UP

Group is a collection of individuals. Group refers to two or more persons who interact with one another, share common goals and they recognise themselves that they belong to a group. They interact with each other, either directly or indirectly and their relationship is relatively stable. Their interaction should be structured in some manner so that they perform the same and similar function when they meet.

Generally group members help to satisfy both psychological and social needs, such as towards giving attention and receiving attention. Groups help us to fulfill our need for security. In contrast, we can think about a mere collection of individuals, who are not part of a group, as for example, members of a crowd, as in the case of disorganised group. In a nutshell it can be said that the group has some kind of structure to hold it together and attain the goals effectively. The structure is hierarchical where the functions and powers are distributed. Group may be of different types, viz., primary and secondary group, formal and informal group, organised and spontaneous group, command group, task group, functional group, interest group, friendship group, reference group etc. Group structure is a pattern of relationships among members that hold the group together. It can be interpreted in various ways depending on group size, group roles, group norms and group cohesiveness.

1.11 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Define group and discuss the importance of the group.
- 2) Enumerate the characteristics of a group.
- 3) Elucidate the different types of groups, their roles and functions.
- 4) Differentiate between formal and informal group with examples.

1.12 GLOSSARY

Attitude	: An enduring system of evaluations or feelings in favour of or against a person or group.
Belief	: Acceptance of a statement about an object, event, person or group.
Cohesiveness	: The social force which keeps the group together.
Group	: A collection of individuals who are in interdependent relationship with one another sharing common norm of behaviour and attitude.
Informal group	: A group which is not organised.
Group structure	: The differences of roles and status relations within a group.
Group dynamics	: The way in which changes take place in the behaviour of other members of the group. Groups can mobilise powerful force which may be constructive or destructive.

- Peer group** : A primary group composed of persons who are closely alike in age and interests.
- Value** : Values are ideas about desirable states of affairs shared by the members of a group or culture.

1.13 SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 2 GROUP DYNAMICS

Structure

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Groups Dynamics: Definition
 - 2.2.1 Meaning, Concept and Importance of Group Dynamics
 - 2.2.2 Role of Communication in Group Dynamics
 - 2.2.3 Interpersonal Attraction and Cohesion in Group Dynamics
 - 2.2.4 Group Dynamics and Social Integration
- 2.3 Culture and Group
- 2.4 Measurement of Group Dynamics
- 2.5 Group Development
- 2.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.7 Unit End Questions
- 2.8 Glossary
- 2.9 Suggested Readings

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Group dynamics is the scientific approach to the understanding of the dynamics of group. It implies an interactive psychological relationship in which members of a group develop a common perception based on feelings and emotions. Group dynamics refer to the changes that take place within the group. It also refers to forces operating within the groups. Group dynamics is related to the field theory of Lewin which assumes man's behaviour to be a function of the field existing at the time of the occurrence of behaviour. We can further say that it is the study of group processes, their objective analysis and measurement and the effect of group membership on individual members.

Our behaviour is not static. It means that the change of behaviour is through interaction in the group. According to Segal, group dynamics is a process by which one considers other individuals and a problem in a group at the same time. It not only tends to increase understanding of the problem, but also creates a solution which the individual practices in bringing about emotional balance. We can also say that group dynamics is influenced by sympathy, suggestion and imitation. Sympathy enables the members of a group to perceive the psychological state of the other members. Suggestion plays a big role in influencing group behaviour. The suggestions put forward by leader of a group are implemented by the members of the group.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you, will be able to:

- 1 explain about the group interaction process;

- 1 define about the meaning of group dynamics;
- 1 elucidate the concept of group dynamics;
- 1 express the importance of group dynamics process; and
- 1 find out the group dynamics vis-à-vis different processes and patterns.

2.2 GROUP DYNAMIC: DEFINITION

A group includes only persons who share some norms and values about something. We can say that group contains people with interrelated social roles. An aggregate of people may form themselves into a group as a result of interaction. Thus, we can say that groups are the products of interaction. Group interaction is a two way process whereby each individual or group stimulates the other and also in varying degrees that modify the behaviour of the participants. The behaviour and personality characteristics of individual members of a group affect the behaviour of others and make a significant impact over the functioning of a group as a whole.

In this context we can consider two types of groups, viz., formal and informal groups. Formal groups are formed on the basis of specific norms, values etc. School is an example of formal group. On the other hand, play group, peer group and social clubs are examples of informal groups. In informal groups, rules are usually flexible. An individual may belong to many groups. The behaviour of an individual is different from the group behaviour. In the group a person has to act according to the norms of the group and generally, a few individuals may guide the behaviour of the group.

In this context, we can say that group interaction is a two-way process whereby each individual or group stimulates the behaviour of the participants. We can further say that the behaviour and personality characteristics of individual members of a group affect the behaviour of others and ultimately it makes a significant impact over the functioning of a group as a whole. As for example, we can say that the school is a social institution set up by the society to serve its ends. School is primarily a social institution. Group activities should be encouraged to provide opportunities to the students to participate in the affairs of the group.

One of the important functions of the school is social interaction. Not only are the teachers and pupils continually interacting in the class-room system, but the pupils are also interacting among themselves through special pre determined code or signs or looks, and there are many common stereotypes and values that they share with each other. Like any other social system, the class-room group shows a variety of interactions continuously. Formal structure is not only factor in group functioning. Within this formal structure, there is informal relationship. Communication within the group may flow more through informal channels than through formal ones. The informal sub-groups are typically more homogenous than the classroom group. Not only this, peer group pressures exert a powerful impact in many cases.

2.2.1 Meaning, Concept and Importance of Group Dynamics

In 1944, Kurt Lewin, set up the Research Centre for Group Dynamics to meet the need of a scientific approach to the understanding of the dynamics of group.

Group Dynamics

Group dynamics can be defined as a field of enquiry dedicated to the advancing knowledge about the nature of groups, the laws of their development and their interrelations with individuals, other groups and larger institutions. Actually, it implies that the interactive psychological relationship in which members of a group develop a common perception based on feelings and emotions. It is not easy to define the important area of group dynamics. We can say that it represents a field of enquiry, a series of inter-related problems, a set of techniques and interaction process.

Group dynamics consists of two words – (i) group and (ii) dynamics. A group is a unit of two or more individuals who share a set of beliefs and values. The members of the group share a common purpose, task or goals. The relations among the members are interdependent. Not only this, there is a feeling of belongingness or we feeling among the members of the group. The members of the group generally prescribe a set of norms of behaviour for themselves. The members want to attain the goal effectively. The structure is hierarchical where the functions and powers are distributed.

On the other hand, the word dynamics means force. Group dynamics refers to forces operating with in the groups. Group dynamics is related to field theory of Lewin, which assumes man's behaviour to be a function of the field existing at the time of the occurrence of behaviour. We can also say that the group dynamics is the study of group processes, their objective analysis and measurement and the effect of group membership on individual members. When a group of people is formed with a common goal, a kind of social force is created. Our behaviour is not static. Thus, group dynamics means the change of behaviour through interaction in the group.

Concept of group dynamics

The social psychologists seek to explain group behaviour on the basis of social interaction and cultural transmission through social interaction. The interactive psychological relationship is termed as “group dynamics”. The important two variables we can say in this context are “group cohesiveness” and “group locomotion”. Cohesiveness plays a vital role in determining the influence of the group on the members. On the other hand, locomotion indicates the movement towards the desired goal. Personality of the individual and character of the social situation both takes an important role for group dynamics. All the psychological effects take place within the individual members who compose the group. According to Cartwright and Zander (1968), the basic assumptions are:

- i) the groups are inevitable (even the hermits / Sanyasis and the Hippies),
- ii) that groups mobilise powerful forces that produce effects of utmost importance to individuals,
- iii) that groups can produce constructive as well as destructive consequences and
- iv) that it is the correct understanding of group dynamics based on empirical studies that helps in enhancing the constructive aspects of group life and group achievements.

It can also be said that group cohesiveness indicates the degree to which the members stick together so that there is unity in the group. Actually the basis of attraction to the group may lie in the interaction itself because of the mutual

satisfaction of needs. The group may be teen-age group or a political group or a religious group. Three important things one can consider for group cohesiveness, i.e., task direction, personal attraction and group prestige. The strength of the cohesiveness may vary on the basis of the situation. Thus, when we study the group as a whole we are aware of studying changes which occur in the behaviour of the individuals and how these changes are transmitted to all the individuals to the total field, so that the behaviour of the group is altered. On the other hand, when the group itself shows a readiness to change by active participation then actual social change becomes possible. The change will occur when the group actually takes the decision to change. Thus the concept of group dynamics is helpful in understanding social changes which involve not only the introduction of an innovation, but also in overcoming of resistance.

Group dynamics is also influenced by sympathy, suggestion and imitation. Sympathy enables the members of a group to perceive the psychological state of the other members. Actually the members begin to feel as others feel. On the other hand, suggestion plays a big role in influencing the group behaviour. The suggestions put forward by the leader of the group are readily accepted. The behaviour of the leader of the group is initiated by the members of the group. Besides this, some specific group techniques which could be utilised for improvement of the group process, viz., buzz sessions, role playing, brain storming and recreational experiences.

In buzz sessions, in which five or six members participate and is organised for purposes of stimulating discussion. In role playing, problems are handling in such a manner so that it comes for the benefit of the group. Brain storming in which group is organised for stimulating discussion. Recreational experiences where opportunities are provided to the group members to participate in group discussion.

Self Assessment Questions

1) What do you mean by Group dynamics?

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2) According to Cartwright and Zander (1968) what are the basic assumptions of group dynamics?

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3) Group dynamics is influenced by (i).....,(ii).....and (iii).....

Importance of group dynamics

The importances of group dynamics are given below:

Group Dynamics

- i) It is essential for effective practice with any type of task.
- ii) It promotes out the unproductive meetings.
- iii) Individual members or group as a whole benefit in a number of ways.
- iv) Underlying group dynamic is the multicultural diversification of the society.
- v) The future functioning of the group is influence by group dynamic.
- vi) Facilitates the participation of the members.
- vii) Helps to achieve the goals of the group in connection with the participation and satisfaction of the group.
- viii) It increases the interpersonal attraction.
- ix) It increases the communication processes and interaction patterns.
- x) It increases the power and control of the group.
- xi) It creates impact on racial, ethnic and cultural background.

2.2.2 Role of Communication in Group Dynamics

Communication involves the transmission of a message from a sender to a receiver. According to Toseland and Rivas (2001) communication includes:

- i) encoding of perception, thoughts and feelings into language and other symbols by a sender;
- ii) transmission of language and symbols verbally, non-verbally or virtually; and
- iii) decoding of the message by the receiver.

Face-to-face group members experience both verbal and non-verbal communication, whereas members of telephone groups experience only verbal communication and members of computer groups experience only virtual communication. Interaction patterns are also fundamental to group dynamics. According to David (1980) some of the significant points in this regard include:

- i) Leader is the central figure, and communication occurs from member to leader and leader to member.
- ii) Group members take turns talking.
- iii) Indication of extension between leader and the member.
- iv) All members freely communicate.
- v) Interaction pattern focuses on the degree of centralisation of communication.
- vi) Group-centered interaction pattern is more valued than leader-centered interaction pattern.
- vii) Indication of full participation among the members.

- viii) The status and power relationship within the group affect the interaction pattern.
- ix) Interpersonal attraction and the emotional bonds that form between members influence the interaction pattern.
- x) Size of the group affect the interaction pattern. In general, there is more chance to communicate if the group size is small.
- xi) Selective attention, clues and reinforcement may take important role to change the interaction patterns.
- xii) If members do not interact with equal valence, there seems to be indication of sub-group formation.
- xiii) Interpersonal attraction, emotional bonds and interest may create impact on the group members.
- ix) Physical arrangement in some situation may affect interaction patterns.

Thus, we can say the communication processes and interaction patterns are important factors for group dynamics.

2.2.3 Interpersonal Attraction and Cohesion in Group Dynamics

We can say that sub-group formation depends on interpersonal attraction among the group members and the level of cohesion depends on this. There are some important features that can be mentioned here:

- i) Proximity increases interaction among people and ultimately it increases attraction.
- ii) Similarity tend to make people attract toward each other.
- iii) The important contributing factors are acceptance and approval.
- iv) Members are attracted to those who engage in group interactions that meet their expectations.
- v) Interpersonal attraction is just one of the building blocks of group cohesion.
- vi) Compatibility tends to promote interpersonal attraction.
- vii) Group cohesion is the sum of all the forces that are exerted on members to remain in a group.
- viii) Cohesion means satisfaction of group members' need for affiliation, recognition and security.
- ix) Participation of the group members increases the prestige and resources.
- x) Cohesion reveals the positive relationship among the group members.
- xi) Cohesion can lead to a level of conformity that detracts from the work of the group.

Group Dynamics

According to Toseland and Rivas (2001) high levels of cohesion have been associated with beneficial group member behaviours. These include the following:

- i) greater perseverance towards group goals;
- ii) willingness to take responsibilities for group functioning;
- iii) willingness to express feelings;
- iv) willingness to listen; and
- v) ability to use feedback and evaluations.

High levels of group cohesion are generally associated with positive outcomes. We can also say in this regard that

- 1 Great satisfaction with the group experience,
- 1 Higher levels of goal attainment by group members and group members and group as a whole,
- 1 Great commitment by group members,
- 1 Increased feelings of self-confidence, self-esteem and personal adjustment, amongst members of the group.

Sometimes it happens that high levels of cohesion may lead to dependence on the group. Some members remain silent. In this context we can say that there is a relationship between group dynamics and interpersonal attraction as well as cohesion.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Write five importances of group dynamics.

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- 2) Write two features of group dynamics.

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2.2.4 Group Dynamics and Social Integration

Social integration means how group members fit together and are accepted in the group. In each and every group there are norms, roles and status. These are the group dynamics that promote social integration by influencing how members behave. The norm, status and roles help the groups to avoid conflict and unpredictability

which may create chaos. It is true that group can not function effectively without a fairly high level of social integration among group members. Social integration helps to build unanimity about the purposes and goals of the group.

Deutsch and Gerard (1955) postulated two forms of social influence: normative influence and informational influence. Normative influence is the desire to meet other people's expectations and to be accepted by others. Informational influence is accepting and being persuaded by information provided by others. It is undoubtedly true that certain amount of predictability, conformity and compliance is necessary for the group members to work together to achieve the goals of the group. Actually norms develop slowly in the group, as members experience what is valued and what is preferred behaviour through group interaction.

On the other hand, roles are shared expectations about the functioning of individual members of the group. Members may take different roles. Besides this, status refers to the ranking of importance of members of the group relative to each other. Status is determined by the prestige, power, position and expertise. Because a group member's status is measured in relationship to other members, it may change when other members join or leave the group. Status is also determined by the situation. Status hierarchies have a good deal of influence on social integration within groups. Thus, norms, roles and status are important components of the social influence that groups have on members.

2.3 CULTURE AND GROUP

Culture as is well known is a combination of values, beliefs and traditions of the society. Every individual born in that culture and it influence his overall personality. Values, beliefs, customs, traditions etc. are important factors for culture and these are shared by group members. When group members meet, they explore their value system and interpersonal styles, searching for a common ground on which to relate to each other. The culture of a group is determined by the communality and also the larger society. The system depends on the nature and extent of their interaction with the group. Multicultural differences are salient interpersonal factors that have significance for the group culture. Group processes have reflected the European and American values of individualism, independence, competitiveness and achievement. Besides this, cultural experiences of group survival, social hierarchy, inclusiveness and also ethnic identification influence the way members interact with one another in the group. Member's expectations and goals in a multicultural group vary widely. They significantly influence the dynamics of the group (Hopps and Pinderhughes, 1991; Matsukawa, 2001). According to Davis et al (1995), the group leader should be sensitive to racial /ethnic and socio-economic differences, should understand the effect of these differences on group dynamics and should translate this knowledge into culturally sensitive modes of program development and service delivery. Many factors affect group development. Structural characteristic is one of the important impacts on development.

2.4 MEASUREMENT OF GROUP DYNAMICS

Measurement of group dynamics is essential to understand the behaviour of a group as a whole as well as individuals who make up the group. There are many scales to measure group dynamics, viz., Group Climate Questionnaire (Mackenzie, 1983), Group Cohesiveness Scale (Budman, 1993), Group Work Engagement

Measure (Macgowan, 2000) and Group Member Interpersonal Process Scale (Soldz, 1993). Task groups, such as committees, teams, board of directors are not merely collections of individuals. The synergy that is created when people come together to work in these groups transcends the collection of individual efforts. We have to pay attention to group dynamics because group dynamics facilitate member participation and satisfaction to achieve the group goal.

2.5 GROUP DEVELOPMENT

As groups develop over time, group dynamic processes evolve. In this context, we can mention a well-known model by Tuckman (1963), which is known as stage model (as mentioned in unit 1). The stages are:

- i) forming,
- ii) storming,
- iii) norming and
- iv) performing.

There is also the widely used model by Garland, Jones and Kolody (1976) Here the five significant stages are:

- i) Pre-affiliation: Should be affected to the group.
- ii) Power and control: Should be able to have some influences over the other members.
- iii) Intimacy: There must be certain closeness and intimacy.
- iv) Differentiation: The group members should be able to differentiate their personal goals from group goals
- vi) Separation: This refers to each influence having a separate identity despite being part of the group.

Beginning stages of group development are characterised by the formation of group dynamics. Members interact tentatively, establishing norms, roles and status hierarchies and ultimately a group culture slowly emerges through interaction. At first, interaction is tentative and cautious and there exists little conflict. After that members become more comfortable resistance can develop. After that members want to become a part of the group but at the same time group members maintain their own identity and independence. Many factors affect group development. Structural characteristics have an important impact on group development.

2.6 LET US SUM UP

Like individuals, groups are also entities that pose characteristics and properties which can be observed, measured, classified and predicted. There are certain conditions which predetermine certain kinds of behaviour on the part of members of the group and the group as a whole. The term “group processes” is sometimes applied to the formulations or explanations of such tendencies. “Group dynamics” is a term introduced by Kurt Lewin. Both “group processes” and “group dynamics” carry the implication that groups are to be considered as entities characterised by

change and on-going activity. Groups may be formed in different ways. Once groups have been formed, they tend to take on certain characteristics. They are likely to develop a structure, whereby members have positions that stand in relationship to one another. Reciprocal role patterns, positions, expectations and certain predetermined attitudes and percepts constitute the structure that gives groups a degree of stability and predictability. The willingness of people to join, remain with, or leave a group may be explained in terms of the rewards they receive and the costs that they incur.

Existence of any group depends on the participation and satisfaction of the individuals comprising the group. Social approval as far as the individual is concerned is expressed in terms of his being accepted by other members. As far as the group is concerned, it is expressed in terms of the individual's conformity to its norms. The group's willingness to accept is thus exchanged for the member's willingness to conform. It is fundamental to group life. This type of exchange is so fundamental in group life that it is difficult to imagine ourselves particularly in any other way. There is an intimate relationship between group acceptance and individual conformity. Group may be formed voluntarily and spontaneously because of a felt need to socialise or to accomplish some practical aim or they may be converted by external authority. The attractiveness of group that develops for its members is termed as its cohesiveness. Compatibility generally facilitates cohesiveness but cohesiveness and compatibility are not necessarily conducive to group effectiveness in some kinds of tasks. Generally, group cohesiveness depends on the extent to which members recognise and adhere to its norms. Small, intimate, face-to-face groups are the ones that demand and receive the highest degree of personal involvement. Group may be inclusive or exclusive depending on their functions and goals. In traditional societies exclusiveness is more likely to be based on social status than in more equalitarian societies. Our behaviour is not static. Interaction is an important part in this regard. Group dynamics is essential for effective practice with any type of task or treatment group.

Group dynamics mainly depends on:

- i) communication process and interaction patterns;
- ii) interpersonal attraction and cohesion;
- iii) social integration and influence;
- iv) power control and
- v) culture.

Although an understanding of group dynamics is essential for effective practice with individuals and communities, it is our belief that focused attention to the dynamic processes that occur in groups is what distinguishes group work from other forms of social work practice. We can say that culture, ethnicity and race affect the dynamic processes that develop and evolve in groups.

2.7 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) What do you mean by the term “group dynamics”?
- 2) Write in brief about the importance of group dynamics.

- 3) What is group development?
- 4) Is there any relationship between interpersonal attraction and cohesion with group dynamics? – Discuss.
- 5) Write in brief about culture and group.

2.8 GLOSSARY

Attitude	: An enduring system of evaluations or feelings in favour of or against a person or group.
Belief	: Acceptance of a statement about an object, event, person or group.
Cognition	: Sensation, perception, thoughts, ideas and such processes.
Cohesiveness	: The social force which keeps the group together. It is the product of attractiveness of the interaction with group members.
Communication	: The exchange of meaning and mutual influence.
Cooperation	: It arises when groups work together in the pursuit of common interest.
Culture	: The pattern of all arrangements, material or behavioural, which have been adopted by a society.
Dependence	: The condition in which a person or a group relies on another for its need satisfaction and outcomes.
Group	: A collection of individuals who are in interdependent relationship with one another sharing common norms of behaviour and attitude.
Group dynamics	: The way in which changes which take place in the behaviour of some members of the group lead to changes in behaviour of other members of the group. This is why groups can mobilise powerful force which may be constructive or destructive.
Group structure	: The differentiation of roles and status relations within a group.
Informal group	: A group that is not organised.
Power	: Ability of an individual or a group to control the process of decision making even against resistance.
Social change	: Alteration in the structure of a society.
Social cohesion	: Degree to which group members share common beliefs, practices and values.
Social control	: Application of positive and negative sanctions (rewards

and punishments) by a group to encourage its members to abide by the group norms, perform the required roles.

Social facilitation : The process by which a person works faster and turns out more when he is working with others than when he is working alone.

Social movements : Collective activity aimed at correcting some perceived inadequacy in the existing social arrangements.

Society : The most complex type of human group composed of many subgroups.

2.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

Baron, R.A. and Byrne, D.(2000). *Social Psychology*, 8th Edition, Prentice Hall of India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

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UNIT 3 SOCIAL IDENTITY, CROWDING AND CROWD BEHAVIOUR

Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Objectives
- 3.2 Social Identity Theory
- 3.3 Definition of Crowd
 - 3.3.1 Active Crowd
 - 3.3.2 Inactive Crowd
- 3.4 Crowd Psychology
- 3.5 Crowd Behaviour
- 3.6 Theories of Crowd Behaviour
 - 3.6.1 Classical Theory
 - 3.6.2 Convergence Theory
 - 3.6.3 Group Mind Theory
- 3.7 Collective Behaviour
 - 3.7.1 Mass Society
 - 3.7.2 Audience
 - 3.7.3 Mob
 - 3.7.4 Fashion
- 3.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.9 Unit End Questions
- 3.10 Glossary
- 3.11 Suggested Readings

3.0 INTRODUCTION

Individuals are not self-contained units of psychological analysis. Social identity theory states that people think, feel and act as members of groups, institutions and cultures. The social identity approach reinforces the idea of the individuals' social cognitions which are socially constructed depending on their group or collective frames of reference. Social identity is mainly composed of four elements, viz., categorisation, identification, comparison and psychological distinctiveness. Actually social identity refers to the membership or associations of an individual with a primary group ranging from nuclear to extended based on factors as the individual's capacities, experiences, mobility and location. Ethnicity is a powerful social identity with many components, viz., common biological origins, customs, habits, norms etc. Personal identification with a specific group and the development of an in group mentality is involved in social identity theory.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you, will be able to:

- 1 define social identity;
- 1 describe crowd;
- 1 elucidate the crowd behaviour theory;
- 1 describe audience, mob, public, mass society, fashion; and
- 1 explain collective behaviour.

3.2 SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

We, the human being spend a lot of time thinking about ourselves. We can also say that self is the centre of each person's social universe. Our self-concept is mainly acquired through the interaction with the immediate family and also with the other people with whom we meet throughout our life. Actually self-concept is one's self-identity which consists of an organised collection of beliefs and feelings about oneself. We can further say that we develop our social identity which includes how we conceptualise ourselves, including how we evaluate ourselves.

Self- concept also includes all of the information and feelings relevant to our past, present and future selves. We use the term self-concept which influences how we process information about the social world around us along with information about ourselves – such as our motives, emotional status, abilities, self-evaluation etc. All these important things influence how we process social and personal information that is relevant to our own identities. People want to know about others' beliefs, affiliations and intentions in order to interpret their words and actions and to predict their future behaviour.

Social identity theory explains how people develop a sense of membership and belonging in particular group. There are many interconnected mechanisms in this theory. People generally seek out group membership as an affirmation of self-esteem, but that membership as an affirmation of self-esteem, but that membership in a group alone is not enough to build an affirm self-esteem. To feel more self-esteem, people have to believe that they are in the right group, which creates the need for a positive distinction from other groups.

People want to know about others' beliefs, affiliations and intentions in order to interpret their future behaviour. These qualities we are unable to observe directly. We do not build up our impression of another trait by trait. Interpretation of identity is subjective. Social identity Theory was developed by Tajfel and Turner in 1979. In this theory, it was highlighted that a person has not one "personal Self" but rather several selves that corresponds to widening circles of group membership. An individual has multiple "social identities". It is the individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership of social groups (Hogg and Vaughan, 2002). Tajfel and Turner (1979) identified three variables which has contribution to the in-group favouritism is particularly important.

- 1 the extent to which individuals identify with an in-group to internalise that group membership as an aspect of their self-concept;

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- 1 the extent to which the prevailing context provides ground for comparison between groups;
- 1 the perceived relevance of the comparison group, which itself will be shaped by the relative and absolute status of the in-group.

Social identity theory has a considerable impact on social psychology. It is tested in a wide range of fields and settings and includes prejudice, stereotyping, negotiation and language use. The social identity theory has implication on the way people deal with social and organisational change.

Besides this, we can also say that social identity is mainly composed of

- i) categorisation,
- ii) identification,
- iii) comparison, and
- iv) psychological distinctiveness.

Generally social identities are associated with normative rights, obligations and sanctions which within specific collectivities form roles. Social identity refers to the membership or association of an individual with “primary” and other human beings. The significant factors which we can mention here are mainly individual’s capacity, experiences mobility and location.

3.3 DEFINITION OF CROWD

Crowd is a physically compact organisation of human beings brought into direct, temporary and unorganised contact with one another. If some people stand together for a short time at any place, then it may be called crowd. The crowd is the most transitory and unstable of all the social groups. Actually crowd exhibits no patterns, no characteristic expressions. The collection of human beings in the market or in the open space is also designated as crowd.

MacIver defines crowd as “A physically compact aggregation of human beings brought into direct, temporary and unorganised contact with one another”. According to Kimball Young, “A crowd is a gathering of a considerable number of persons around a centre or point of common attraction”. According to Majumder, “A crowd is an aggregation of individuals drawn together by an interest without premeditation on the part of any of them and without even tentative provision of what to expect”.

Crowd behaviour involves three aspects:

- i) psychological continuity
- ii) polarisation of interest and attention and
- iii) transition and temporary character.

A crowd collects because of some curiosity, interest and other temporary causes and dissolves as many as its cause vanishes. If two people start fighting on the road, a crowd will collect and when they stop their struggle, it will break up.

3.3.1 Active Crowd

Crowd can be divided into two classes: (a) Active and (b) Inactive.

Active crowd can be further classified into four classes:

- a) **Aggressive crowd:** It is a crowd of people in an aggressive and destructive frame of mind, capable of any and every act of destruction and irrationality, brutality and inhumanity. This kind of crowd exhibits a tremendous excitement.
- b) **Panicky crowd:** Panicky crowd is the panicky or fear-stricken crowd whose constituent members are almost crazed with fear to a point where they can no longer think and find reason. They are almost frightened out of their units, so that thinking is for the time being a task beyond their power. They are concerned with the prime quest of saving their lives.
- c) **Acquisitive crowd:** The aim and objective of each of its members is to obtain or acquire something. Acquisitive crowd is composed almost entirely of individuals whose objectives is to gain or obtain something, be it a cinema ticket, kerosene oil etc.
- d) **Expressive crowd:** In this kind of crowd some people gathered to give expression or to manifest their demands or sentiments. Desire of violence is relatively less pronounced and dominant in the members of an expressive crowd.

3.3.2 Inactive Crowd

No crowd is completely inactive. The difference between an active and inactive crowd is only relative. The inactive crowd even resembles an audience.

You may join in a crowd, where you can find some special characteristics:

- 1 Crowd has no predetermined aim.
- 1 There is no definite time and place for crowd.
- 1 It is a congregate group of individuals who have temporarily identified themselves with common interest.
- 1 It seems that members are motivated by emotions and soon become uncontrollable.
- 1 The behaviour of crowd is not certain.
- 1 People within the crowd stimulate each other.
- 1 Members of the crowd are generally uncontrolled, unorganised and disordered.
- 1 Members are motivated by emotions and soon become uncontrollable.
- 1 The curiosity, values and emotions are temporarily identical and which arises because of common interest.
- 1 Immersed in the crowd, the individual loses self-control and may engage in different types of activities. Crowd behaviour arises as a result of the three mechanisms of anonymity, contagion and suggestibility (Le Bon, 1895).

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- 1 Dollard (1939) used the frustration-aggression hypothesis to explain the violent behaviour of crowds.
- 1 Turner (1964) explained crowd behaviour in terms of “emergent norms”. The contagion, the spread of the feelings and actions is facilitated by the process of mixing, the close proximity, the jostling like the sheep in the herd.
- 1 Generally in crowd people of varying interests and abilities convergence because they share some common quality like hostility, aggressiveness etc.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) Self- concept also includes all of the andrelevant to our past, present and future.
- 2) What does social identity explain?
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- 3) Social identity composed of four elements i.e i).....
ii).....iii).....iv).....
- 4) Define what is crowd?
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- 5) What are the two classes of crowd?
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3.4 CROWD PSYCHOLOGY

Crowd psychology mainly refers to the studies and theories regarding the behaviour of the crowd and also the psychological causes and effects of crowd participation. In a study entitled, “The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind (1895)”, Le Bon suggested that when people become part of a crowd they lose almost all of their individuality, autonomy and personal judgment and morality. According to Carl Jung, it is called “collective unconscious”. Convergence theory emerged during the twentieth century, thinking that acts of the crowd is in unified way, not because of the collective ‘mind’ of the crowd but because they tend to be composed of like-minded people who are attracted into the crowd situation because of a shared interest or objective.

3.5 CROWD BEHAVIOUR

Neither the socio-psychological processes that take place within the crowd nor the techniques employed by the crowd, lead to understanding of crowd behaviour. However the leader provides an adequate understanding of the peculiarities of crowd behaviour. Some of them are as given below:

- 1 In the crowd, with the loss of individuality, a form of group consciousness develops a fusion of mind with mind, a sympathetic participation on emotional level which is common to all the participants. Appeals, slogans are the common features.
- 1 Crowd behaviour is the release of repressed drives. The suggestibility, the exaltation, the lack of self-consciousness, the egoistic expansion and spontaneity, exhibited by the members of the crowd are phenomena susceptible to this kind of explanation.
- 1 We may think of the crowd as a temporary collectivity within which thwarted impulses are afforded an outlet. The close connection between the underlying characteristics of the cultural conditions and the types of crowd those are apt to mark the community life.
- 1 The manifestations of crowd feeling deserve study not only because they reveal the significance of this transitory form of aggregation, but also because they throw light on other social phenomena.

3.6 THEORIES OF CROWD BEHAVIOUR

3.6.1 Classical Theory

The minds of the group would merge to form a way of thinking. Le Bon's idea is that crowd foster anonymity and sometimes generate emotion. Different individuals in a group do not think individually but they think experience and act through the group mind. When individuals collect in a crowd, their individual mind becomes a part of the collective mind. The collective mind thinks in its own way and formulates its own ideas and thoughts, which the individual minds do not formulate in their individual capacities. Emphasis was given on unconscious motives. According to him, in a crowd these unconscious motives get more active. The individual is influenced by these unconscious motives and his own conscious motivation sinks into the background. The person become uninhibited and shows even the lowliest behaviour in the crowd.

3.6.2 Convergence Theory

Crowd behaviour is not a product of the crowd itself, but is carried into the crowd by particular individuals. According to the convergence theory people who wish to act in a certain way come together to form crowds. There is no homogenous activity within a repetitive practice. This theory states that crowd itself does not generate racial hatred or violence. Actually, crowd arises from convergence of people who oppose the presence of particular group of neighbours. Generally people in crowd express existing beliefs and values so that mob reaction is the rational product of widespread popular feeling.

3.6.3 Group Mind Theory

The Group mind theory has been advocated by Lebon, Espinas, Trotter, Durkheim, Mc. Dougall and Allport. According to this theory, the individual in the crowd loses his individuality and becomes a part of the crowd which comes to develop its own crowd consciousness. The mentality of the individual member becomes de-individualised and the person begins to act on an emotional level which is common to all the participants.

Its working is based on emotions, slogans, appeals and suggestions. Its actions are less rational and more emotional. It becomes easily excited and acts in a hypnotic way. Lebon was the first writer to put forward the theory of group mind in 1892. According to him, the sentiments and ideas of all the persons in the gathering take one and the same direction and their conscious personality vanishes.

Different individuals in a group do not think individually but think, experience and act through the group mind. When individuals collect in a crowd, their individual minds become a part of the collective mind. Lebon has laid great emphasis on the unconscious motives. The individual is influenced by the unconscious motives and his own conscious motivation sinks into the background.

Espinas calls group mind as social consciousness. According to him, there is a sort of self-consciousness in every group. Collective consciousness is formed out of the collection of many individuals consciousness taken together.

According to Trotter, everyman is possessed of the instinct of gregariousness. Man's gregariousness activates his mental system as a result of which he accepts the command of the group without any argument and acts according to the command given.

Durkheim has sought to explain group behaviour in terms of collective consciousness. According to him, when people collect in a group, a collective consciousness is created by the mutual exchange of ideas and notions. Actually mind is another name for the flow of consciousness. Social consciousness is a compound of several individual consciousness but its qualities are different from the qualities of the consciousness of the individual.

According to Mc.Dougall, every group has a mind of its own. The group mind is not a mere collection of the minds of all the individual members of group. The group-mind has the power of influencing the mind of the individuals. It is because of this power of the group mind that the thinking of the individual changes when he becomes a member of the group.

According to Allport, the behaviour of the individual in the crowd is influenced by two processes of social facilitation and inter-stimulation. Members of the group motivate each other. Social facilitation and inter-stimulation curb the reasoning capacity of the individuals and increase their suggestibility.

Sometimes crowd behaviour may be the expression of impulses repressed or thwarted by the conditions and social controls of everyday life, but it may not be true of all the crowds. In a crowd all the differences of high and low, rich and poor are submerged and all act as one man. We can say that crowd behaviour is learned. In a crowd the individual responsibility is blotted out. De-individualisation of the individuals in the group leads to reduction of inner restraint and to move expressive behaviour.

Public and Crowd: The public and the crowd while have some factors common, they differ a great deal. While both crowd and public are collectivities of people and are generally organised, one of the important differences is that there is physical contact among the members of a crowd, where as public is scattered at several places. Secondly, public is much bigger group than the crowd and thirdly, the stimulus in the crowd is simultaneous whereas stimulus in the public is diffused. The crowd is more suggestible than the public. Thus, we can say that the crowd and public differ in many ways.

Self Assessment Questions

1) Explain crowd behaviour.

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2) What is classical theory?

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3) Explain convergence theory.

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4) The group-mind theory has been advocated by.....

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5) Differentiate between public and crowd in your own words.

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3.7 COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOUR

All social interactions fall under the category of collective behaviour. When two or more persons behave in the same way, it may be termed as 'collective behaviour'. Any religious congregation may be called collective behaviour. Collective behaviour brings people into contact with others in situations where conventional

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guidelines and formal authority fail to afford direction and supply channels for action. Social unrest may be both the cause and effect of collective behaviour. It may sometimes lead to the emergence of new norms and generally accepted policies. The agitated crowds can develop into disciplined association. Collective behaviour may act as an agent of flexibility and as a forerunner of social change. Some special features of collective behaviour are the following

- 1 It takes place in occasional episodes rather than regularly or routinely.
- 1 It is not regulated by any particular set of rules or procedures.
- 1 It is generally guided by unreasoning beliefs, hopes, fears or hatreds.
- 1 It is unpredictable.

Generally we can say that social life is a system of well-structured and stable relationships. It is characterised by change rather than stability, uncertainty rather than predictability, disorganisation rather than equilibrium.

Collective behaviour entails a crisis or a break in regular routines. Collective behaviour may be an agent of flexibility and social movements and revolutions fall under the category of collective behaviour. A crowd may be said to be more stable than a mob. Under conditions of stress or danger, a crowd may quickly turn into a mob. Crowd may include mob behaviour as well as audience behaviour.

Casual crowd is short in time, loosely organised collectivity that may be motivated by the attraction of the movement. A group of people may collect together when there is an accident on the road. On the other hand, there is conventional crowd which are directed by conventional rules like collection of people in religious festivals.

3.7.1 Mass Society

Mass society is characterised by rationality, impersonal relations, extreme specialisation of roles and loneliness for the individual in spite of concentration of sheer numbers and loss of sense of intimacy and security. In such society's suggestion, persuasion, propaganda and other aspects of crowd behaviour are common (Young, 1948). The modern cities are changing rapidly. It consists of millions of human beings. Personal contacts among the people are reducing day by day. The loss of personal relationship creates a sense of insecurity, loneliness and incompleteness. To overcome these problems, they engage in voluntary organisation, associations and clubs etc. and also affiliate themselves with one or the other of the ashrams. Another significant feature of mass society, with its desire for crowd contacts, is irrationality, susceptibility to propaganda and advertisement. Technological progress and impersonality are based on rational grounds. The sense of insecurity and sense of loneliness makes the individual irrational. In the mass society there is a mixture of rational and irrational thing.

3.7.2 Audience

Audience is a polarised crowd which assembles in one place. It is an index of mental unity. There may be two types of audience

- i) casual audience and

- ii) scheduled audience. A number of people may congregate and become polarised by seeing a street quarrel and it is called casual audience. On the other hand, the crowd which assembles in a lecture hall or cinema hall may be called scheduled audience.

In the audience situation several psychological processes are involved in the interaction of people. This interaction may be of two types, viz.,

- i) between audience and speaker or actor and
- ii) among the member of the audience themselves. The aim of audience is of many types. One is to get facts and interpretations. We can also observe some emotional appeals among audience. Sometimes it may be conversational. As for example we can say that the dramatic troupe or the musician will have to build up rapport with the audience so that the audience appreciates and enjoys the music or the program. If it is unfavourable, then it becomes aggressive one. Group singing breaks down the individual isolation, removes differences in social status and helps to build up common emotions and feelings.

3.7.3 Mob

Generally, the members of a mob tend to show a similarity in feelings, thoughts and actions irrespective of the variation in education, occupation and intelligence. The members of the mob are attending to and reacting to some common object in a common way. Sometimes heightened emotionality is a characteristic feature of mob behaviour. The significant features are anger, fear, joy etc. Sometimes they become unreasonable, intolerant and fickle-minded. Most common characteristic of mob behaviour is the diminished sense of responsibility. They are generally irresponsible. An aggressive mob may indulge in some unfortunate behaviour like destroying music, property attacking the. Not only their sense of autonomy may also be reduced and may become part of mob behaviour. Suggestion, imitation and sympathy – are the three mechanisms of interaction which we can observe in the mob behaviour. It can further be said that mob behaviour is due to the operation of a number of factors, some of which depend upon the predisposition of the individuals and some upon the characteristics of the situation in which the collectivity finds itself. Mob behaviour is conditioned by so many factors – past as well as present, social as well as individual.

3.7.4 Fashion

Fashion is an important example of collective action and it is common with crowd behaviour. Fashion is a variation that is permissible within limits of custom. Fashion as well as fads and crases are based on the desire for change, the desire for something new. There is a psychological reaction and it is outgrowth of emotional and irrational tendencies. It can further be said that fashion sometimes furnishes the desire of conformity, security and social solidarity. Social movements are collective efforts to change the society. Some movements are local, some are national and others are international. The term ‘collective behaviour’ is now used as ‘audience behaviour’, ‘mob behaviour’, ‘social movement’ etc.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) All called under the category of collected behaviour.

2) Write features of collective behaviour.

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3) Two types of audience are (i)(ii).....

4) Mob behaviour is conditioned by three factors i).....
ii).....iii).....

3.8 LET US SUM UP

Generally people want to know about others' beliefs, affiliations and intentions in order to interpret their words and actions and to predict their future behaviour. The premise of the social identity concept is that individuals partially derive their self-concepts from membership in social groups. Social identity concept provides a robust framework for psychologists to understand issues of labeling, self-esteem, discrimination, conformity and in-group or out-group perspectives. Individuals are not self-contained units of psychological analysis. Social identity theory states that people think, feel and act as members of collective groups, institutions and cultures. This approach reinforces the idea that individual's social cognitions are socially construed depending on their group or collective frames of reference. This theory incorporates three main points:

- i) people are motivated to maintain a positive self-concept;
- ii) the self-concept derives largely from group identification ;and
- iii) people establish positive social identities by favorably comparing their in-group against an out- group.

It is true that group often exerts powerful effects upon their members. In this context three important aspects are role, status and norms. Different persons perform different tasks and they expected to accomplish different things for the group. They fulfill different roles. Generally roles are assigned in a formal manner. Groups may choose a person as leader and others as follower. Roles are acquired and people internalise them. They link their roles to key aspects to their self-concept and self-perception. A role may exert profound effects on a person's behaviour. Besides role, another important factor in functioning of group is status. It is social standing or rank within a group. Different roles or position in a group is linked with wide range of desirable outcomes. Groups often confer or withhold status, as a means of influencing the behaviour of their members. Another powerful factor which has significant impact on group is the 'norm'. The rules may be implicit or explicit, established by groups to regulate the behaviour of their members. In many situations, norms tell group members how to behave or how not to behave. Generally group insists upon adherence to their norms as a basic requirement for membership. Groups influence their members through roles, i.e., members' assigned functions in the group; status, i.e., their relative standing in the group and norms, i.e., rules concerning appropriate behaviour for members, and lastly, cohesiveness, i.e., all the factors that cause members to remain in the group.

In this context another important term we can use, i.e., “crowd”. A crowd is a gathering of a considerable number of persons around a centre or point of common attraction. Crowd is a temporary, direct and unorganised group of individuals whose curiosity, values and emotions are temporarily identical and which arise because of common interest or common stimuli. According to the “group-mind theory”, the individual in the crowd loses his individuality and becomes a part of the crowd which comes to develop its own crowd consciousness. Like-minded people, who are attracted into the crowd situation, have a shared interest or object, which is based on convergence theory. The other type of groups we can mention here are mob, audience, mass society etc.

3.9 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) What is identity?
- 2) What do you mean by the term “social identity”?
- 3) Write in brief about “social identity theory”.
- 4) What is crowd? Briefly discuss about the crowd behavior.
- 5) What do you mean by the term mob, audience and mass society?
- 6) Describe mass society and audience.
- 7) Describe mob and fashion

3.10 GLOSSARY

Communication	: The exchange of meaning and mutual influence.
Cohesiveness	: With respect to conformity, the degree of attraction felt by an individual toward an influencing group.
Crowd	: Aggregation of people in close proximity who share some common interest
Crowd psychology	: Crowd psychology mainly refers to the studies and theories regarding the behaviour of the crowd and also the psychological causes and effects of crowd participation.
Group	: A collection of individuals who are in interdependent relationship with one another sharing common norm of behaviour and attitude.
Group structure	: The difference of roles and status relations within a group.
Group decision process	: A procedure in which a group is presented with a problem and communication giving the various alternatives, followed by a discussion and decision regarding the solution of the problem.
Roles	: The sets of behaviour that individuals occupying specific position within a group are expected to perform.

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Role expectations : Anticipations that is associated with a role category.

Role strain : Difficulties in attempting to enact a role.

Social norm : An expectation shared by group members which specifies behaviour considered appropriate for a given situation.

3.11 SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 4 COOPERATION, COMPETITION AND CONFLICTS

Structure

- 4.0 Introduction
- 4.1 Objectives
- 4.2 Social Interaction and Social Process
 - 4.2.1 Social Contact
 - 4.2.2 Communication
- 4.3 Cooperation
 - 4.3.1 Types of Cooperation
 - 4.3.2 Role of Cooperation
- 4.4 Competition
 - 4.4.1 Characteristics of Competition
 - 4.4.2 Value of Competition
- 4.5 Conflict
 - 4.5.1 Causes of Conflict
 - 4.5.2 Characteristics of Conflict
 - 4.5.3 Effects of Conflict
 - 4.5.4 Types of Conflict
 - 4.5.5 Distinction between Conflict and Competition
- 4.6 Accommodation
- 4.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.8 Unit End Questions
- 4.9 Glossary
- 4.10 Suggested Readings and References

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit focuses on three important aspects of management of individuals in a society. Every individual interacts with other individuals in order to survive. In the beginning the interaction is with parent or caretaker, later on with other individuals in the society. As interaction takes place there are cooperation, competition and conflicts emerging in these relationships. The present unit deals with all these three aspects and points out their importance and functions and how individuals work through their conflict, competition and cooperation, so as to achieve their stipulated goals.

4.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- 1 explain social interaction and process;
- 1 define and explain cooperation;
- 1 explain about competition;
- 1 identify conflict situation;
- 1 differentiate between conflict and competition; and
- 1 describe accommodation.

4.2 SOCIAL INTERACTION AND SOCIAL PROCESS

Each and every person is a social and cultural being. It is very difficult for people to live in isolation. Human beings always live in various groups and associations. They act and behave in a certain manner. In each and every moment, the behaviour of each individual is affected by the behaviour of others. This interaction is the essence of social life. Green defines social interaction as “the mutual influences that affects groups. Also these groups affect one another in their attempts to solve problems and in their striving towards goals”. According to Dawson and Gettys, “Social interaction is a process whereby men interpenetrate the minds of each other.” Gish defined social interaction as, “it is the reciprocal influence in which human beings exert on each other through inter stimulation and response.” Thus we can say that social interaction refers to the entire range of social relationships, wherein there is reciprocal stimulation and response between individuals.

Social interaction produces some definite influence upon social relations that exists among human beings. Two essential conditions of social interaction are:

- i) social contact
- ii) communication

4.2.1 Social Contact

Social contact can be established through the medium of radio, letters, telephones and other media of communication. Social contact is the first and important phase of interaction. It may be positive or negative. If it is positive, they lead to cooperation, mutual understanding and assimilation. If it is negative, they create hatred, jealousy and conflict. The above forms of social interaction are termed as social processes. MacIver observes, “social process is the manner in which the relations of the members of a group, are brought together to acquire a certain distinctive character. According to Gillin and Gillin, “by social processes we mean those ways of interacting by which we can establish system of relationships or find out what happens when changes of relationships occur or what happens when changes disturb already existing modes of life.” In this context we can use three important terms, viz., cooperation, competition and conflict.

4.2.2 Communication

Social interaction requires essential communication. Besides this, communications are essential adjuncts of social contact. Language, gestures, symbols, radio, telephone, television, newspaper etc. are the media for communication. Human interaction is undoubtedly a communicative interaction. In this context, we can further say that social interaction usually takes place in the form of co-operation, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation.

Cooperation means working together in the pursuit of a common interest. It is a joint activity. It is the conscious form of social interaction where two or more persons work together to gain a common end. Cooperation may be of different types. Cooperation for human beings is both a psychological and social necessity. On the other hand, competition is an unconscious, impersonal and continuous struggle between individuals and groups for satisfaction. It is a contest to obtain something which does not exist in a quantity sufficient to meet the demand.

Competition, like co-operation, is indispensable in social life. Competition performs many useful functions in society. At different levels, competition occurs. It may be economic, cultural, social, and political. There is no society which is exclusively competitive or exclusively cooperative. Besides competition and cooperation, conflict is another important process in human relations.

Conflict is a conscious action as well as personal activity. It lacks continuity but it is a universal phenomena. Causes of conflict are mainly individual differences, cultural differences, clash of interest, social change etc. Besides this, conflict serves constructive and positive ends. Conflict has both integrative and disintegrative effects.

Interaction is a two-way process whereby each individual or group stimulates the other and in varying degrees modifies the behaviour of the participants. The behaviour and personality characteristics of individual members of a group affect the behaviour of others and make a significant impact over the functioning of a group as a whole. The behaviour of each individual is affected by the behaviour of other individual. This is known as interaction process and it is the essence of social life. According to Eldredge and Merrill, "social interaction is the general process whereby two or more persons are in meaningful contact as a result of which their behaviour is modified, however slightly." Social interaction refers to the entire range of social relationship, wherein there is reciprocal stimulation and response between individuals. Social interaction is of a dual nature, of persons with persons and of groups with groups. The main forms of social interaction are cooperation, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation. Combinations of these are called social processes. Social interaction and social process are:

- 1) sequence of events
- 2) repetition of events
- 3) relationship between events
- 4) continuity of events
- 5) special results.

Group Dynamics

Actually society is an arena where there is expression of different social processes. Social processes are fundamental to the life of a community. Society exists wherever several individuals are in reciprocal relationships. It constitutes an aggregation of individuals in a society. So we can say that there are two forms of social interaction i.e.

- i) conjunctive
- ii) disjunctive.

Social contact initiates interaction. Social process is a variety of view-points. Social behaviour can be classified on the basis of - (a) their intrinsic nature, (b) the inherent drives, instincts, interests, desires etc. and (c) the observable behaviours upon which observers can agree. We are concerned with the fundamental types, i.e., cooperating, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation. Actually interaction occurs in the form of the above mentioned processes.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) According to Dawan and Gettys social interaction is a
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- 2) The two essential conditions of social interaction are:
i) and ii).....
- 3) Cooperation means
- 4) What are the main forms of social interaction?
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4.3 COOPERATION

Cooperation is an integrating activity and is believed to be the opposite of competition. The word “cooperation” is derived from the two Latin words “co” meaning together and “operari” meaning to work. It is thus a joint activity in pursuit of common goals or shared rewards. It is goal oriented and conscious form of social interaction. Actually it involves two elements – (i) common end and (ii) organised effort. It is the process by which individuals or groups combine their effort, in a more or less organised way for the attainment of common objective. Generally co-operation means working together for a common objective. In many festivals, volunteers work together to collect money from different parts and want to organise the program successfully and everybody want to stretch forward their hands to celebrate the occasion successfully. Among the members of the group, there seems to be indication of good interaction process. All of them behave in co-operative manner. Co-operation is brought about by several factors which includes the following:

- 1 desire for individual benefits
- 1 desire to give and share
- 1 total decision on common purposes
- 1 situational necessity and
- 1 desire to achieve larger goals.

4.3.1 Types of Cooperation

We can classify cooperation into five categories, viz.

- i) Direct cooperation
 - ii) Indirect cooperation
 - iii) Primary cooperation
 - iv) Secondary cooperation and
 - v) Tertiary cooperation
- i) **Direct cooperation:** The essential characteristics of this kind of cooperation are that people do in company the thing which can also do separately. In this category cooperating individuals do things of common interest together and perform identical functions. Playing together, worshipping together are the examples of direct co-operation.
 - ii) **Indirect cooperation:** In this type of cooperation individual work towards a common end each has his own specialised functions. Thus, we can say that indirect cooperation is obtained when people perform dissimilar tasks towards a common end, i.e., each has its specialised role to play. In the modern society it is the indirect cooperation which is more in play than the direct cooperation because technological changes require specialisation of skills and functions.
 - iii) **Primary cooperation:** There is an identity of interest between the individual and the group. It is the cooperation which is found in primary groups such as family. Not only family but also peer groups is also called primary cooperation where people have to choose face-to-face relations. We can also say that interest of the individual merge with the interest of the primary group.
 - iv) **Secondary cooperation:** This type of cooperation is generally found in the secondary group, viz., government, industry, church and trade union etc.
 - v) **Tertiary cooperation:** This is the interaction between various big and small group to meet a particular situation. Here the individual or group who wants to compete with one another, come together and cooperate with each other for a specific purpose. In such type of cooperation the attitudes of the cooperating parties are purely opportunistic.

4.3.2 Role of Cooperation

It is a universal phenomenon. Cooperation for human beings is both a psychological and social necessity. Individual as well as collective goals can not be achieved without cooperation. Cooperation is essential for maintenance of social order. We

can not do anything without cooperation, if we are to live as members of the society. Family members cooperate with each other in terms of sharing economic, emotional and social requirements of one another. All the activity in each and every family is done in a cooperative way. People learn their first lesson in cooperation as members of the family. The physical, mental and even the spiritual needs of the individual remain unsatisfied if he does not agree to cooperate with his fellow members.

Self Assessment Questions

- 1) What are the types of cooperation? Give name only.

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- 2) Define direct and indirect cooperation.

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- 3) Explain tertiary cooperation in your own words.

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- 4) What is the role of cooperation?

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4.4 COMPETITION

Competition is the most important form of social struggle. According to Anderson and Parker, "Competition is that form of social action in which we strive against each other for the possession of or use of some limited material and non-material goods." According to Sutherland, Woodward and Maxwell, "Competition is an impersonal, unconscious continuous struggle which, because of their limited supply, all may not have." Competition is a form of interaction. It is the struggle for position to gain economic status. It occurs whenever there is an insufficient supply of anything that human being desire - insufficient in the sense that all cannot have as much of it as they wish. Sometimes competition happens because of limited supply and also difficult for equal distribution.

4.4.1 Characteristics of Competition

The characteristics of competition are:

- 1 Competition is impersonal struggle. Park and Burgess defined competition as “interaction without social contact.” We can say it is inter-individual struggle that is impersonal. It is usually not directed against any individual or group in particular.
- 1 Competition is universal. There is no society which is devoid of competition. Not only this, degree of competition may vary from society to society. It is very common for society as well as culture.
- 1 Competition is considered as conducive to progress. Competition provides the individuals better opportunities to satisfy their desires for new experiences and recognitions.
- 1 Both associative and non-associative dimensions of social processes indicate competition.
- 1 Competition is mainly an unconscious activity but personal competition or rivalry is a conscious activity.
- 1 Competition may create emotional disturbances.
- 1 Competition is an innate tendency.
- 1 Competition is a social phenomenon.
- 1 Degree of competition is determined by social values and social structure.

4.4.2 Value of Competition

Competition is indispensable in social life. Competition performs many powerful functions in society. Sometimes competition is extremely dynamic. It performs five positive functions.

- 1 It helps to determine the status and location of individual members in a system of hierarchy.
- 1 It tends to stimulate economy, efficiency and inventiveness.
- 1 It tends to enhance one's ego.
- 1 It prevents undue concentration of power in an individual or group of individuals.
- 1 It creates respect for the rules of the same group.

We can say that competition determines who is to perform what function. According to Ross, “Competition performs that broad function of assigning to each individual in his social world. Competition is a progressive force which fulfils and does not necessarily destroy.” We can further say that fair competition is conducive to economic as well as social progress. Competition provides the individuals better opportunities to satisfy their desires for new experiences and recognition. It believes in achieved status. Sometimes competition has some negative function. It may lead to frustration. It may lead to monopoly. It may lead to conflict. It may create emotional disturbances. It may develop unfriendly and unfavourable attitudes among the persons or groups toward one another. It is true that unfair competition has the most disintegrating effects. Sometimes unlimited competition leads to monopoly.

Competition and cooperation differ in many respects. No society is exclusively competitive or exclusively cooperative. Actually, social system is a balance between competitive and cooperative force. But some competition is healthy and fair.

Self Assessment Questions

1) Explain competition in our own words.

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2) Write three characteristics of competition.

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3.) Explain the value of competition in the society.

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4.5 CONFLICT

Conflict is a conscious action. It is a deliberate intent to oppose. We can say that conflict is universal. Not only this, conflict lacks continuity. Besides this, it is a personal activity. According to Gillin and Gillin, "Conflict is the social process in which individuals or groups seek their ends up directly challenging the antagonist by violence or threat of violence." Green defined, "Conflict is the deliberate attempt to oppose, resist and coerce the will of another or others." Conflict is a competition in its more occasional, personal and hostile forms. It is a process of seeking to obtain rewards by eliminating or weakening the competitors. It is inherent in every society or social system. Conflict is apparently noted when an individual or a group seeks to attain its own end. Conflict is the opposite of cooperation. Conflict may lead to antagonism, violence or threat to peace. Conflict is also regarded as non-associative social process.

4.5.1 Causes of Conflict

According to Freud and some other psychologists, the innate instinct for aggression in man is the main cause of conflicts. Generally it arises from a clash of interest within groups and societies and between groups and societies. The significant causes are:

- 1 **Individual difference** – It is true that, we, the human being, are not alike by nature, attributes, interests, personalities etc. These differences may lead to conflict among the human being.
- 1 **Cultural differences** – The culture of a group differs from the culture of the

other group. The cultural differences among the groups sometimes cause tension and lead to conflict.

- 1 **Differences of opinion regarding interest** – In fact, the interests of different people or groups occasionally clash. For example we can say that interests of the employers and employees vary in many respect which may ultimately leads to conflict among them.
- 1 **Social change** – Social changes occur off and on in each and every society. Conflict is an expression of social disequilibrium. Social change is the cultural log which leads to conflict.

4.5.2 Characteristics of Conflict

The characteristics of conflicts are:

- 1 Although conflict is universal but it's nature vary from society to society. No society is characterised exclusively by conflict.
- 1 Conflict is a conscious action. To achieve the respective goals the members oppose one another.
- 1 Conflict leads to social change. It is mainly an expression of disequilibrium.
- 1 It primarily remains personal activity. Sometimes it acquires greater intensity and involves many people. At first, it is manifested at the level of a particular group but ultimately it involves the entire society.
- 1 Asymmetrical social, political and economic relations coupled with the sense of relative deprivation as the root cause of social conflict.
- 1 Sometimes conflict is the life of society and progress emerges from a struggle in which each individual, class or institution seeks to realise its own idea of good.
- 1 We the people are organised into groups to seek a common goal, the probability of conflict increases.
- 1 All conflicts are not the same.
- 1 We face conflicts on all levels as we have disagreements with family, friends and co-workers.
- 1 Conflict is an ever-present process in human relations.
- 1 Unmanaged conflict is a threat to the survival of the group and ultimately tends to make the group less effective.
- 1 Conflict can occur within groups (intra-group conflict) and among groups (inter-group conflict).

4.5.3 Effects of Conflict

Conflict sometimes creates positive and sometimes creates negative impact. The effects of conflict are many and manifold. It is varied as well as unpredictable. We can say that the conflict may have the following effects:

- 1 Increases tension within or between the groups

Group Dynamics

- 1 Disrupt normal activities
- 1 Weaken group activities
- 1 Harmful to individuals
- 1 Help to restructure the group
- 1 Help to form new groups
- 1 Gives positive result
- 1 Improves decision-making process
- 1 Increase bitterness
- 1 Increase alienation
- 1 Become violent
- 1 Help to gain recognition
- 1 Increase unity and cohesion
- 1 Strengthen group boundaries
- 1 Help to form new group.

Thus, we can say that conflict has both positive and negative effects. It is true that conflict happens in any set-up and it creates impact on group members.

4.5.4 Types of Conflict

Conflict may be of various types, viz,

- 1) Overt and covert: Overt conflict has some manifestation but covert conflict or latent conflict primarily remains invisible.
- 2) Personal and corporate: Personal conflict occurs within the group due to hostility, jealousy etc., on the other hand, corporate conflict occurs among the groups within a society or between two societies.
- 3) Temporary and perpetual: When conflict occurs among the individuals in the bus or in the shop or in the road are called temporary conflict, on the other hand when conflict occurs between two rival groups, then it is called perpetual conflict.

Conflict is not a continuous process. It may stretch for sometime. In each and every conflict there is intermittent period of peace and social harmony.

According to Gillin and Gillin, conflict can be divided into five types, viz.,

- 1 Personal conflict – It is the conflict between two persons within the same group.
- 1 Racial conflict – It is the result of the feeling or racial superiority or inferiority.
- 1 Class conflict – It is the conflict between two classes.
- 1 Political conflict – It is the conflict between parties of political power.
- 1 International conflict – It is the conflict between two nations.

Self Assessment Questions

1) Explain conflict.

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2) What are the causes of conflict?

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3) Write five characteristics of conflict.

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4) Write negative effects of conflicts.

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4.5.5 Distinction between Conflict and Competition

The salient points are:

- 1 Conflict takes place on a conscious level, competition is unconscious.
- 1 Competition is non-violent, but conflict may create violence.
- 1 Conflict involves contact, competition does not.
- 1 Competition is a continuous process, but conflict is an intermittent process.
- 1 Conflict disregards social norms but competition does care social norms.
- 1 Conflict takes place on a conscious level but competition is unconscious.

Besides this, we can say that conflict and competition have a common root because in each case individuals and groups are generally striving towards incompatible goals. Conflict may lead to alliances with other groups, creating bonds between loosely structured groups or bringing together different individuals and groups in a community as they unite to fight a common threat. The structure

of the group and its degree of tolerance of conflict will affect the results of intra-group dissatisfaction. Actually conflict is a fundamental human and social trait. Cooperation is a condition of conflict. Internal harmony and external conflict are the opposite sides of the same shield.

4.6 ACCOMMODATION

Conflict is a continuous intermittent-societal process. Accommodation is resolution of conflicts which means adjusting oneself to the new environment. Accommodation denotes acquired changes in the behaviour of their environment. According to MacIver, “the term accommodation refers particularly to the process on which man attains a sense of harmony with his environments. Besides this, as a process, accommodation is the sequence of steps by which persons are reconciled to changed conditions of life through the formation of the changed conditions themselves. Accommodation is a term used by the sociologists to describe the adjustment of hostile individuals or groups. Accommodation is the process by which the individuals and groups make the necessary internal adjustments to social situation which have been created by competition and conflict. Accommodation is associated with the social order that is fixed and established in custom and the mores. Assimilation implies a more thorough going transformation of the personality – transformation which takes place gradually under the influence of social contacts of the most concrete and intimate sort.

4.7 LET US SUM UP

The interactions – cooperation, competition and conflict are elementary, universal and fundamental form. Generally, social contact initiates interaction. Interaction refers to an action done in response to another action, but when this interaction through repetition leads to a result, then it is called a social process. The essential elements of social process are:

- i) sequence of events,
- ii) repetition of events,
- iii) relationship between events,
- iv) continuity of events; and
- v) Special result.

Not only this, there are some classification which classify social behaviour on the basis of (a) their intrinsic nature, (b) inherent drives, instincts, interests, drives and (c) the observable behaviour upon which observers can agree. In this context we are concerned with the fundamental types, i.e., cooperation, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation. People come together in groups to socialise to get things done, or because they require to do so. Much of what we accomplish as individuals and as groups depends on our ability to get others to work with us on common tasks and fort mutually acceptable goals.

Group functions may be centralised or decentralised, may be simple or complex. But what we are referring to is the process known as cooperation – working

together for mutually acceptable goals. Cooperation may involve merely our participation in a set of mutually understood role behaviours. The kind of cooperation that takes place between individuals occupying positions of unequal power and status actually amounts obedience or compliance. Cooperation at a more advanced level may take place in problem-solving situations – situations that have a relatively high degree of ambiguity and a low degree of structural or predictability. Cooperation involves mutual goals, but competition is concerned with personal goals. In competition, individual try to secure a greater-than-equal share of the rewards available to members of the group.

Common-sense attitudes towards competition are based on the traditional idea that there is only a fixed quantity available for use or distribution of the “good things in life” – economic advantages, comfort, fame, happiness and the like. In as much as people are attracted in order to satisfy social need, how members feel about the groups in which they participate in an important consideration. Traditional societies are likely to be less competitive than urban, industrialised societies. Life in urbanised societies offers many opportunities, large or small, to prove oneself competitively. Today we are much concerned about involving people throughout the world in large-scale problem-solving. The problems of the world – health, education, peace and war, preservation of the ecology, allocation of scarce resources – can not be solved by individual people or individual nations. They can be solved only by cooperation and collaboration. Besides this, social contact, which inevitably initiates conflict, accommodation, or assimilation invariably, creates sympathies, prejudices, personal and moral relations, which modify, complicate and control competition.

Conflict, assimilation and accommodation are all intimately related to control. Competition is universal in the world of living things. The cumulative effects of innovations, technological revolution, environmental crisis, generation gap, new value orientation, break-up of the normative structure etc are the factors which create conflicts. Social interaction is the reciprocal influences which human being exert on each other through inter stimulation and response. Social interaction and social process are interrelated factors. Society is an expression of different social processes and there are variety forms of social processes. Among the various processes, cooperation, conflict and competition are the important one.

4.8 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) What is social interaction?
- 2) What do you mean by the term social process?
- 3) Is there any relationship between competition and conflict? – Discuss.
- 4) Write in brief about the causes and characteristics of conflict.
- 5) Elucidate briefly about cooperation.
- 6) What are the general types of conflicts?
- 7) Elucidate briefly about accommodation.

4.9 GLOSSARY

- Attitude** : An enduring system of evaluations or feelings in favor of or against a person or group.
- Communication** : The exchange of meaning and mutual influence.
- Competition** : Competition is impersonal, unconscious, continuous struggle between individuals or groups for satisfaction which, because of their limited supply, all may not have. Competition is that form of social action in which we strive against each other for the possession of or use of some limited material or non-material good.
- Conflict** : Conflict is the social process in which individuals or groups seek their ends by directly challenging the antagonist by violence or threat of violence.
- Cooperation** : Cooperation is a form of social interaction wherein two or more persons work together to gain a common end. It is the process by which individuals or groups combine their effort, in a more or less organised way for the attainment of common objective.
- Group** : Two or more people who interact and influence one another.
- Group dynamics** : The way in which changes take in the behaviour of other members of the group. Groups can mobilise powerful force which may be constructive or destructive.
- Interaction** : Interaction is a two-way process whereby each individual or group stimulates the other and in varying degrees which modifies the behaviour of the participants.
- Social cohesion** : Degree to which group members share common beliefs, practices and values and thus act together.
- Social distance** : Degree to which individuals are willing to interact with people from different social background.

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